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WITH NOTES BY TOBIAS SMOLLETT, REVISED AND MODERNIZED
NEW TRANSLATIONS BY WILLIAM F. FLEMING, AND AN
INTRODUCTION BY OLIVER H. G. LEIGH

A CRITIQUE AND BIOGRAPHY
BY
THE RT. HON. JOHN MORLEY

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VOLUME XXXVIII

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VOLTAIRE

THE HENRIADE:
LETTERS AND MISCELLANIES

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INTRODUCTION.

"The Henriade," the only French epic, was begun when the author was a prisoner in the Bastille. The second Canto, describing the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, came to Voltaire in a dream, so he told his friend Wagnière, adding that he retained the lines until he had the chance to write them and "he never found anything to change in it." The poem was ten years in the making. It was ready for printing in 1723, when he was in his thirtieth year. He had received a number of subscriptions for it before he realized that the tone of the Dedication and the poem would bring it under the ban of the censors.

The Dedication is unique of its kind. The young king, Louis XV., had just attained his majority.

"SIRE: Every work in which the great deeds of Henry IV. are spoken of, ought to be offered to your majesty. It is the blood of that hero which flows in your veins. You are king only because he was a great man, and France, that wishes you as much virtue as he possessed, and more happiness, flatters itself that the life and the throne which you owe to him will engage you to imitate him.

"Fortunate in having known adversity, he felt for the miseries of men, and softened the rigors of a rule from which he had suffered himself. Other kings have courtiers; he had friends. His heart was full of tenderness for his true servants.

"That king, who truly loved his subjects, never regarded their complaints as sedition, nor the remonstrance of magistrates as encroachment upon the sovereign authority. Shall I say it, sire? Yes; truth commands me so to do. It is a thing very shameful to kings, this astonishment we experience when they sincerely love the happiness of their people. May you one day accustom us to regard that virtue as something appertaining to your crown! It was the true love of Henry IV. for France which made him adored by his subjects."

The poem was a brilliant protest against intolerance by the powers of Church and State. How, then, could itself be tolerated? The "privilege" of publication was denied. By the help of friends it was secretly printed in Rouen in 1724. It was smuggled into Paris and had an instant success, as "a wonderful work, a masterpiece of the mind, as beautiful as Virgil." It has had a lasting popularity in seven languages. The English edition appeared in 1728 as "the first edition published with the author's sanction." This time the author dedicated "The Henriade" to Queen Caroline, whose husband had been one year king of England. She had been the friend of Sir Isaac Newton when Princess of Wales.

To the Queen:

"MADAM: It was the lot of Henry the Fourth to be protected by an English queen. He was assisted by the great Elizabeth, who was in her age the glory of her sex. By whom can his memory be so well protected as by her who resembles so much Elizabeth in her personal virtues?

"Your majesty will find in this book bold, impartial truths; morality unstained with superstition; a spirit of liberty, equally abhorrent of rebellion and of tyranny; the rights of kings always asserted and those of mankind never laid aside.

"The same spirit in which it was written gave me the confidence to offer it to the virtuous consort of a king who, among so many crowned heads, enjoys the almost inestimable honor of ruling a free nation: a king who makes his power consist in being beloved, and his glory in being just.

"Our Descartes, who was the greatest philosopher in Europe before Sir Isaac Newton appeared, dedicated his "Principles" to the celebrated Princess Palatine Elizabeth; not, said he, because she was a princess (for true philosophers respect princes, but never flatter them); but because of all his readers she understood him the best, and loved truth the most.

"I beg leave, madam (without comparing myself to Descartes), to dedicate "The Henriade" to your majesty

upon the like account, not only as the protectress of all arts and sciences, but as the best judge of them.

"I am, with that profound respect which is due to the greatest virtue as well as the highest rank, may it please your majesty, your majesty's most humble, most dutiful and most obliged servant, VOLTAIRE.

The publication enriched its author, who was presented with two thousand crowns by the king and received other honors. "The Henriade" was at last "privileged" to be sold in France, in 1731. Frederick of Prussia wrote a glowing preface for a sumptuous edition he produced at lavish expense, in which he pronounced "The Henriade" the greatest of all epics, ancient or modern.

THE HENRIADE

LETTERS AND MISCELLANIES.

THE HENRIADE.

CANTO I.

The Argument.

Henry III., joined by Henry de Bourbon, King of Navarre, against the League, having blockaded Paris, sends Henry de Bourbon privately into England, in hopes of obtaining aid from Queen Elizabeth. A violent storm overtaking him in his voyage, he is obliged to put into an island, where an old hermit receives him, and foretells his change of religion, and accession to the throne. Description of England, and its government.

The chief renowned,[1] who ruled in France, I sing,
By right of conquest and of birth, a king;
In various sufferings resolute and brave,
Faction he quelled: he conquered, and forgave.
Subdued the dangerous League, and factious Mayenne,[2]
And curbed the headstrong arrogance of Spain.

[1] Henry IV., of France, son of Anthony, King of Navarre, who descended in a direct line from Robert, Count de Clermont, youngest son of Louis IX., or St. Louis of France. The posterity of his eldest son, Philip the Bold, failing in Henry III., three hundred years after the death of St. Louis, Henry de Bourbon became heir to the crown, as descended from the above-mentioned Count de Clermont, who married Beatrix, daughter of Agnes de Bourbon, heir of Arehemband, Lord of Bourbon in the middle of the thirteenth century.

[2] Charles, Duke of Mayenne, brother of Henry, Duke of Guise, who formed the League, a faction in France; who, under pretence of danger to the Church, made head against Henry III. of France, and, after his death, against Henry de Bourbon, who gained great advantage over the Spaniards in confederacy with the League.

He taught those realms he conquered to obey,
And made his subjects happy by his sway.
O heaven-born truth, descend, celestial muse,
Thy power, thy brightness in my verse infuse.
May kings attentive hear thy voice divine,
To teach the monarchs of mankind is thine.
'Tis thine to war-enkindling realms to show
What dire effects from cursed divisions flow.
Relate the troubles of preceding times;
The people's sufferings, and the princes' crimes.
And O! if fable may her succors lend,
And with thy voice her softer accents blend;
If on thy light her shades sweet graces shed,
If her fair hand e'er decked thy sacred head,
Let her with me through all thy limits rove,
Not to conceal thy beauties, but improve.
Valois[1] then governed the distracted land,
Loose flowed the reins of empire in his hand:
Rights were confounded, laws neglected bore
No force, alas! for Valois reigned no more.
No more the prince for deeds of war renowned,
Whom as her son victorious conquest owned;
Whose arms through Europe spread disordered fear,
Whose loyal subjects shed the pious tear,
When the bleak North proclaimed him truly great,
And laid her crowns and sceptres at his feet.
Those rays of glory, erst in battle won,
Sank into night, and vanished from the throne.
There sat the monarch in the lap of ease,
Reclining fondly in the arms of peace;

[1] Henry III., King of France, one of the principal heroes of this poem, is always called Valois, the name of the royal branch to which he belonged.

Too weak to bear in each lethargic hour,
The regal diadem, and weight of power.
Voluptuous youths usurped the sole command,
And reigned, in truth, the sovereigns of the land.
Pleased in their soft luxurious prince to find
Corrupted morals, and a female mind.
Meantime the Guises rose at fortune's call;
And built their schemes of greatness on his fall.
Thence sprang the League, which proved the fatal source
Of numerous ills, and baffled all his force.
The servile crowd, with vain chimeras fed,
Too blindly followed where the tyrants led.
Now from the Louvre see the monarch fly,
No faithful friend, no kind protection nigh;
All had been lost, but warlike Bourbon[1] came,
Whose generous soul was fraught with virtue's flame.
'Twas his the royal sacrifice to save,
And teach once more the monarch to be brave.
The kings to Paris with their troops advance,
The eyes of Europe all are fixed on France.
Rome takes the alarm, her fears the Spaniards share,
And wait with dread the issue of the war.
High on the walls inhuman Discord stood,
Eager for slaughter, and athirst for blood;
Through all the city raged, nor raged in vain,
But drove to arms the hostile League, and Mayenne:
Through Church and State, the deadly poison spread,

[1] Henry IV. is called indifferently throughout the poem either Bourbon, or Henry. He was born at Pau in Béarn, December 13, 1553.

And called the proud Iberia to her aid.
This savage monster scenes of horror loves,
And plagues the votaries whom her soul approves.
She racks and galls the slaves her chains confined,
And riots in the torments of mankind.
Westward of Paris, where the winding Seine
Adorns each meadow with eternal green,
Where oft the Graces and the Muses play,
The troops of Valois shone in dread array.
There, whom religion swayed by different laws
Revenge united in their sovereign's cause.
A thousand chiefs stood forth at Bourbon's word,
Love joined their hearts, and valor drew the sword.
With joy they followed the bright paths of fame,
But one their leader, and their Church the same.
Immortal Louis [1] eyed him from above
With all the fondness of parental love:
Virtues he saw which Gallia's king might grace,
And future glories worthy of his race.
Charmed with his courage, yet he grieved to find
Such weak discernment in so brave a mind:
Would gladly guide him to the throne of truth,
And wished to check the errors of his youth.
But valiant Henry gained the regal crown,
And rose by measures to himself unknown.
Louis was present from his blest abode
To lead the youthful hero in his road.
Full oft unseen the kind assistance came,
That toils and dangers might augment his fame.
Oft had our walls beheld with martial rage

[1] St. Louis, the ninth of that name, King of France, from whom the Bourbon branch was descended.

In doubtful war the embattled ranks engage.
The plains were desolate, and carnage spread
From shore to shore her mountains of the dead,
When Valois thus addressed the chief with sighs,
And tears of sorrow streaming from his eyes:
"See to what height thy monarch's ills are grown,
There read the faithful portrait of thy own.
With equal hate the factious Leaguers join
To strike at Bourbon's glory, and at mine.
Seditious Paris, with a proud disdain,
Rejects the present, and the future reign.
The ties of blood, the laws, each generous care
That fills thy soul, proclaims thee lawful heir.
Great are thy virtues, and, I blush to own,
For this would Paris drive thee from the throne.
Nay, more, to show that heaven approves the deed,
Religion heaps her curses on thy head.
Rome without armies distant nations awes,
Spain hurls her thunder, and asserts her cause.
Friends, subjects, kindred, in this evil day,
Or basely fly, or proudly disobey.
Rich is the harvest of Iberia's gains,
Who pours her legions on my desert plains.
Perchance, the succors of a foreign force
May stop the impending danger in its course.
Britannia's queen may lend the friendly aid,
And mutual terror may our foes invade.
What, though eternal jealousy and pride
Oppose our interest, and our hearts divide,
When life's severest ills have been endured,
My glory blasted, and my fame obscured,
When vile affronts have made my honor poor,
My subjects, and my country are no more,

Who comes these proud insulters to control
Is most my friend, and dearest to my soul.
No common, listless agent will I trust,
Be thou my envoy in a cause so just. '
On thee my fortune in the war depends,
Thy merit only can procure me friends."

Thus Valois spoke, and Bourbon heard with grief
The new designs, and counsels of the chief.
His great and generous mind disdained to yield
Thus to divide the glory of the field.
There was a time when conquest met his arm,
And all those honors which the brave can charm:
When strong in power, unaided by intrigue,
Himself, with Condé,[1] quelled the trembling League.
Yet, in obedience to the king's command,
He left his laurels, and withdrew his hand.
The troops, amazed, with restless ardor burn,
Their fate, their fortune wait on his return.
The absent hero still preserved his fame,
The guilty city shuddered at his name:
Each moment thought the mighty warrior near,
With death and desolation in his rear.

He through the plains of Neustria bends his way,
Attended only by his friend Mornay,[2]
Mornay, too good to flatter, or deceive,
The cause of error too averse to leave.
By zeal and prudence studious to advance

[1] Henry, Prince of Condé. He was the hope of the Protestant party: and died at Saint-Jean d'Angély, aged thirty-five years, in 1685.

[2] Duplessis-Mornay; the bravest, and most virtuous person belonging to the Protestant party. When Henry IV. changed his religion, Mornay reproached him in the severest manner, and retired from court. He was called the pope of the Huguenots.

Alike the interest of his Church and France,
The courtier's censor, but at court beloved,
Rome's greatest foe, and yet by Rome approved.
Between two rocks, which hoary ocean laves
And beats with all the fury of his waves,
The port of Dieppe meets the hero's eyes,
And crowds of eager mariners supplies.
Their hands prepare the vessels for the main,
Those sovereign rulers of the azure plain.
The stormy Boreas, fast-enchained in air,
Leaves the smooth sea to softer Zephyr's care.
Their anchor weighed, they swiftly quit the strand,
And soon descry Britannia's happy land.
When lo! the day's bright star is hid in clouds,
And gathering whirlwinds whistle through the shrouds.
Heaven gives her thunder, waves on waves arise,
And floods of lightning burst from all the skies.
Death mounts the storm, and foaming billows show
The king of terrors to the sailors' view.
Nor death, nor dangers Bourbon's soul annoy;
His country's sorrows all his cares employ;
For her he casts the longing look behind,
The storm accuses, and condemns the wind.
Less generous warmth the Roman's breast inspired,
By love of conquest, and ambition fired,
When, launching boldly from Epirus' coast,
By angry seas and furious surges tossed,
He dared his mightier fortune to oppose
To all the power of Neptune, and his foes:
Firm, and convinced that no impending doom
Could snatch its monarch from the world, and Rome.

'Twas then that Being, infinitely wise,
At whose high will all empires fall, or rise,
Who gave this world its fair and beauteous form,
Who calms the ocean, and directs the storm,
On Gallia's hero looked with pity down
From the bright radiance of His sapphire throne.
The waves, obedient to His dread command,
Conveyed the vessel to the neighboring land.
Guided by heaven, secure the hero stood
Where Jersey's isle emerges from the flood.
Near to the shore there lay a calm retreat,
By shades defended from the solar heat.
A rock, that hid the fury of the seas,
Forbade the entrance of each ruder breeze.
By nature's hand adorned, a mossy grot
Improved the beauties of this rural spot.
A holy hermit, trained in wisdom's ways,
There spent the quiet evening of his days.
Lost to the world, and all its trifling show,
His only study was himself to know.
O'er every fault his pensive mind would rove,
Which pleasure dictates, or which springs from love.
The flowery meadows, and the silver streams
Had raised his soul to more enlightened themes.
Each passion quelled in this retired abode,
His ardent wish was union with his God.
Wisdom before him spread her ample page,
And heaven protected his declining age.
She poured her purest blessings on his head,
And taught him Fate's mysterious book to read.
The hoary sage, who well our hero knew,
Whom God informed with science ever true,
Near a clear stream invites the prince to taste

The simple diet of his rural feast.
He oft had fled from vanity and care,
To humble cottages, and simpler fare;
Had bid adieu to courts, and courtly pride,
And laid the pomp of majesty aside.
In plain and useful converse much was said
Of troubles through the Christian empire spread.
Mornay unmoved determined to protect
With zealous fervor Calvin and his sect.
Henry, in doubt what precepts to believe,
Petitioned heaven one ray of light to give.
"Error," he said, "in all preceding times,
Has truth concealed, and been the nurse of crimes.
Must I then wander, and mistake the road,
Whose only confidence is placed in God?
A God, so gracious, sure will lend His aid,
And teach mankind what worship should be paid."
"Let us," replied the venerable seer,
"God's secret counsels, and designs revere.
Nor rashly think that human errors bring
Their muddy currents from so pure a spring.
Well I remember, when these aged eyes
Beheld this sect in humble weakness rise,
When, as an exile dreading human sight,
It fled for refuge to the shades of night.
By slow degrees the phantom raised her head,
And all around her baleful influence shed.
Placed on the throne, no power her force confines,
She reigns our tyrant, and o'erturns our shrines.
Far from the court, in this obscure retreat,
With sighs and tears I weep Religion's fate.
One hope remains to cheer life's dreary vale;
So strange a worship cannot long prevail:
Its new-born glory in our days shall cease,

First sprung from man, and founded in caprice.
Frail, like ourselves, all human works decay;
God sweeps their glory and their pride away.
Safe and secure His holy city stands;
Nor dreads the malice of our mortal hands.
In vain the fabric hell and time invade,
His own right arm the strong foundation laid.
On thee, great Bourbon, will He pour His light,
And chase the mists of error from thy sight.
On Valois' throne, with Providence thy shield,
Bright wilt thou shine, and all thy foes shall yield.
Through paths of glory conquest leads thy sword;
'Tis heaven's decree; the Highest gave His word.
Yet hope not rashly, in the pride of youth,
To enter Paris, uninformed by truth.
But most of love's bewitching draught beware,
The bravest hearts are conquered by the fair.
From that sweet poison guard thy manly soul;
Though passion calls, and pleasure crowns the bowl.
And when, at length, this sage advice pursued,
The factious Leaguers, and thyself subdued,
In horrid siege thy bounteous hand shall give
Life to a nation, and its strength revive;
Then all thy realms shall taste the sweets of peace,
All strife shall vanish, and all discord cease.
Then raise thine eyes to that almighty Lord
Whom erst our fathers honored and adored.
Who most preserves His image, most shall find
That virtue pleases, and that heaven is kind."
Thus spoke the seer, each word new warmth bestowed,
And Henry's soul with secret raptures glowed.
Those happy days were present to his eyes,

When God to man descended from the skies;
When virtue opened all her sacred springs,
Pronounced her oracles, and governed kings.
With tears he clasped the hermit to his breast,
And parting sighs his honest grief expressed.
Far distant scenes creative fancy drew,
And rising glories dawned upon his view.
Marks of surprise were stamped on Mornay's face,
But heaven from him withheld her gifts of grace.
The world in vain bestows the name of wise,
Where virtue beams, but error's clouds arise.
While thus the sage, enlightened from above,
Spoke to the heart, and tried the prince to move,
Charmed with his voice the listening winds subside,
Phœbus breaks forth, and ocean smooths the tide.
By him conducted, Bourbon reached the shore,
And prosperous gales the chief to Albion bore.
Soon as he saw the sea-encircled isle,
Its change of fortune made the hero smile.
Where once the public evils owed their cause
To long abuses of the wisest laws,
Where many a warrior fell of high renown,
And kings descended from the tottering throne,
A virgin queen the regal sceptre swayed,
And fate itself her sovereign power obeyed.
The wise Eliza, whose directing hand
Had the great scale of Europe at command;
And ruled a people that alike disdain
Or freedom's ease, or slavery's iron chain.
Of every loss her reign oblivion bred;
There, flocks unnumbered graze each flowery mead.
Britannia's vessels rule the azure seas,
Corn fills her plains, and fruitage loads her trees.

From pole to pole her gallant navies sweep
The waters of the tributary deep.
On Thames's banks each flower of genius thrives,
There sports the Muse, and Mars his thunder gives.
Three different powers at Westminster appear,
And all admire the ties which join them there.
Whom interest parts, the laws together bring,
The people's deputies, the peers, and king.
One whole they form, whose terror wide extends
To neighboring nations, and their rights defends.
Thrice happy times, when grateful subjects show
That loyal, warm affection which is due!
But happier still, when freedom's blessings spring
From the wise conduct of a prudent king.
"O when," cried Bourbon, ravished at the sight,
"In France shall peace and glory thus unite?"
A female hand has closed the gates of war,
Look on, ye monarchs, and adopt her care.
Your nations Discord's horrid tide o'erwhelms,
She lives, the blessing of adoring realms.
  Now at that spacious city he arrives,
Where nursed by heaven-born freedom plenty lives.
Now, mighty William's tower before him stood,
Now, fair Eliza's more august abode.
Thither he speeds, attended by Mornay,
His friend and sole associate in the way.
True heroes that pageantry and state,
Whose glittering honors captivate the great.
For France he supplicates with humble prayers,
And native dignity each accent bears.
From honest frankness all his periods flow,
The only eloquence that soldiers know.
"Does Valois send you to the banks of Thame?"

Eliza cries, surprised at Valois's name.
"Are all your dire contentions at an end!
And you, that bitterest enemy, his friend!
Fame spread your discords, and that fame was true,
From north, to south, from Ganges, to Peru.
And does that arm, so dreaded in the fight,
Protect his honor, and maintain his right!"
"Distress," replied the chief, "our friendship gave,
The chains are broke, and Valois will be brave.
Far happier days he once was doomed to see,
Had all his confidence been placed in me.
But fears unmanly in his breast arose,
'Twas art and cowardice that made us foes.
Henceforth, the vanquished shall my aid receive,
His wrongs I punish, and his faults forgive.
This war so just may raise Britannia's fame,
'Tis thine, great queen, to signalize her name.
Let royal mercy spread her downy wings,
And crown thy virtues by defending kings."
The queen, impatient, asks him to relate
What ruthless evils harassed Gallia's state.
What springs of action had produced a change
At once so new, so wonderful, and strange.
"Full oft of bloody broils," Eliza said,
"Through Britain's isle has fame the rumor spread.
But who for certainty on fame depends,
Which light with darkness, truth with falsehood blends?
From you or Valois' friend, or conquering foe,
Those long dissensions I could wish to know.
Yourself was witness, and can best impart
What mystic ties have changed so brave a heart.

Display your martial deeds, your griefs declare,
No life more worthy of a royal ear."
"And must I then," returned the chief with sighs,
"Recall those scenes of horror to my eyes?
O would to heaven, oblivion's endless night
With thickest shades might veil them from my sight!
Must Bourbon tell of kindred princes' crimes,
And the fell madness of preceding times?
I shudder at the thought, but your command,
Respect of power forbids me to withstand.
Others, no doubt, would use refined address,
Disguise the truth, and make their errors less:
But I reject an artifice so weak,
And like a soldier, not an envoy, speak."

CANTO II.

The Argument.

Henry the Great relates to Queen Elizabeth the history of the civil wars of France. He traces them from their origin, and enters into a detail of the massacres perpetrated on St. Bartholomew's Day.

In France, great sovereign, to increase the curse,
Our ills are risen from a sacred source.
Religion, raging with inhuman zeal,
Arms every hand, and points the fatal steel.
To me however it will least belong
To prove the Romans, or Geneva wrong.[1]
Whatever names divine the parties claim,
In mad imposture they are both the same.
If in the strifes, which Europe's sons divide,
Murder and treason mark the erring side;
Since both alike in blood their hands imbrue,
Their crimes are equal, and their blindness, too.
For me, whose business is to guard the state,
I leave to heaven their vengeance and their fate.
My hand ne'er trespassed on the rights divine;
Or e'er profaned the incense of the shrine.
Perish each statesman cruel and unkind,
Who reigns despotic o'er the human mind;

[1] Several historians have described Henry IV. as wavering between the two religions; here he is described as he was, a man of honor, seriously endeavoring to inform himself, the friend of truth, the enemy of persecution, and detesting guilt wheresoever it appeared.

Who stains with blood religion's sacred word,
And kills, or gains new converts by his sword;
Presuming rashly that a gracious God
Approves the sacrifice of human blood.
Oh, would that God, whose laws I wish to know,
On Valois' court such sentiments bestow!
The Guises[1] falsely plead religion's cause,
No scruple checks them, and no conscience awes.
At me those leaders, insolent and proud,
Direct their fury, and ensnare the crowd.
These eyes have seen our citizens engage
In mutual murders, with a zealous rage:
For vain disputes have seen their pious care
Deal all around the horrid flames of war.
You know the madness of those vulgar minds
Which faction warms, and superstition blinds;
When, proudly arming in a cause divine,
No power their headstrong passion can confine.
Erst in these happy realms yourself beheld
The rising evil, and its danger quelled:
The troubled scene assumed a milder form;
Your virtuous cares subdued the gathering storm.
No reign more pleasing could I wish to see,
Your laws are flourishing, your city free.
Far other paths did Medici pursue,
Far less beloved, less merciful than you.
Moved by these tales of misery, and woe,
More of her conduct should you seek to know,

[1] Francis, Duke of Guise, commonly at that time called the Great Duke of Guise, was the father of Balafré. It was he, who with the cardinal, his brother, laid the foundations of the League. He had several great qualities, which, however, we must take care not to dignify with the name of virtues.

Myself her real character will tell,
Nor aught exaggerate, nor aught conceal.
Many have tried, but few could e'er impart
The secret counsels of so deep a heart.
Full twenty years within the palace bred,
Much to my cost, I saw the tempest spread.
The king expiring in the bloom of life
Left a free course to his ambitious wife.
Formed by her cares to empire, either son
Alike she hated when he reigned alone.[1]
Her hands, the source from whence confusion flowed,
The seeds of jealousy and discord sowed.
Her deep designs, no wild effect of chance,
To Condé Guise opposed, and France to France.[2]
By turns defending enemies and friends,
And rivals aiding for her private ends,
False to her sect, and superstition's slave,[3]
She sought each pleasure which ambition gave.
Scarce did one virtuous grace adorn her mind,
Deformed with all the vices of her kind.
Forgive the freedom of an honest heart;
You reign a stranger to your sex's art.

[1] Catherine de Medici quarrelled with her son, Charles IX., toward the latter part of his life, and afterward with Henry III. She had so openly expressed her dislike of the government of Francis II. that she was suspected, though unjustly, of having hastened the death of that king.

[2] In the memoirs of the League is contained a letter from Catherine de Medici to the Prince of Condé, in which she returns him her thanks for having taken arms against the court.

[3] When she believed that the battle of Dreux was lost, and the Protestants had gained the victory, "Well, then," she cried, "we will say our prayers in French." She was also so weak as to believe in magic; witness the talismans which were found upon her after her death.

August Eliza, blessed with every charm
That thought can fancy, or that heaven can form,
To win affection, or to guard a state,
Lives a bright pattern to the good and great.
With love and wonder all your deeds are seen,
And Europe ranks you with her greatest men.
Francis the Second, in youth's early pride,
By fate untimely joined his sire, and died.
Guise he adored, no more his years had shown,
Nor vice, nor virtue marked him for their own.
Charles, younger still, the regal name obtained,
But fear evinced, 'twas Medici that reigned.
She sought by artful policy to bring
Eternal childhood on the rising king.
A hundred battles spoke her new command,
And discord's flames were kindled by her hand.
Two rival parties she with rage inspired,
Their arms directed, and their bosoms fired.
Dreux[1] first beheld their banners wave in air,
Ill-fated theatre of horrid war!
Old Montmorency[2] near the royal tomb
Met from a warrior's arm a warrior's doom.
At Orleans Guise[3] resigned his latest breath,

[1] The battle of Dreux was the first pitched battle between the Catholic and Protestant parties. It occurred in 1562.

[2] Anne de Montmorency, a man remarkable for his obstinacy, and the most unfortunate general of his time, was taken prisoner at Pavia and at Dreux, beaten at St. Quentin by Philip II., and was at length mortally wounded at the battle of St. Denis by an Englishman named Stuart, the person who had taken him prisoner at Dreux.

[3] This is the same Francis de Guise mentioned afterward, famous for the defence of Metz against Charles V. He was besieging the Protestants in Orleans in 1563, when Poltrot de Meré shot him in the back with a pistol loaded with three poisoned balls. He was forty-four years old when he died.

A stern assassin gave the stroke of death.
My father still unwilling slave at court,[1]
Was fortune's bubble, and the queen's support;
Wrought his own fate, in battle firmly stood,
And died for those who thirsted for his blood.
Condé [2] vouchsafed a parent's aid to lend,
My surest guardian, and my truest friend.
Nursed in his camp, beneath the laurel's shade,
Amidst surrounding heroes was I bred.
Like him disdaining indolence and sloth,
Arms were the toys and playthings of my youth.
O plains of Jarnac! O unhappy day
That took my guardian and my friend away!
Condé, whose kind protection I enjoyed,
Thy murdering hand, O Montesquieu, destroyed:
Too weak, too feeble to avenge the blow,
I saw thee deal destruction on the foe.
Young and untaught, exposed to every ill,
Heaven found some hero to protect me still;
Great Condé first my steps to glory trained,

---

[1] Anthony of Bourbon, King of Navarre, the father of Henry IV., was of a weak and unsettled temper. He quitted the Protestant religion, in which he was born, just when his wife renounced the Catholic. He never knew with certainty to what party or what religion he belonged. He was killed at the siege of Rouen, where he assisted the Guises, who were his oppressors, against the Protestants whom he loved. He died in 1562, at the same age as Francis de Guise.

[2] The Prince of Condé who is here meant was a brother of the King of Navarre and uncle of Henry IV. He was for a long time chief of the Protestants, and a great enemy of the Guises. He was slain after the battle of Jarnac by Montesquieu, captain of the guard to the Duke of Anjou, afterward Henry III. The Count of Soissons, son of the deceased, sought diligently after Montesquieu and his relations, that he might sacrifice them to his vengeance.

Next my good cause Coligny's[1] arm sustained:
Coligny, gracious queen! if Europe see
A virtue worthy her regard in me,
If Rome herself confess my youthful days
Not unrenowned, Coligny's be the praise.
Early I learned beneath his eye to bear
A soldier's hardships in the school of war;
His great example my ambition fired,
His counsel formed me, and his deeds inspired.
I saw him gray in arms, yet undismayed,
The general cause reclining on his aid;
Dear to his friends, respected by the foe,
Firm in all states, majestic though in woe;
Expert alike in battle and retreat,
More glorious, even more awful in defeat,
Than Gaston or Dunois in all the pride
Of war, with France and fortune at their side.
Ten years elapsed of battles lost and won,
Still on the field our well-armed legions shone;
With grief the queen her barren trophies viewed,
Our hardy troops, though vanquished, unsubdued,
And at one stroke, one fatal stroke ordained
To sweep the civil fury from the land.
Sudden new counsels in her court prevailed,
And peace was offered, when the sword had failed.
Peace! be thou witness, heaven's avenging power!
That treacherous olive how it blushed with gore;
Gods! is it then so hard a task to stray,
And shall their monarchs teach mankind the way?

---

[1] Gaspard de Coligny, admiral of France, the son of Gaspard de Coligny, marshal of France, and of Louisa de Montmorency, sister of the constable, born at Châtillon, February 16, 1516.

True to his sovereign still, devoutly true
Though he opposed her, to his country, too,
Coligny seized the happy hour to heal
Her bleeding interests, with a patriot's zeal.
Undaunted through surrounding foes he pressed,
(Suspicion seldom haunts a hero's breast)
Nor stayed, till in her own august abode,
Full in the midst before the queen we stood.
With circling arms and flowing tears she strove
To lavish o'er me even a mother's love;
Coligny's friendship was her dearest choice,
Still to be ruled by his unerring voice;
Wealth, power, and honor at his feet she laid,
Her son's indulgence to our hopes displayed,
Vain flattering hopes alas! and quickly fled.
All were not blinded by this specious show
Of cordial grace and bounty from the foe.
But Charles, still anxious to insure success,
More bounteous seemed, as they believed him less.
Trained up in falsehood from his earliest youth,
He held eternal enmity with truth;
From infant years had treasured in his heart
The poisonous precepts of his mother's art;
And fierce by nature, merciless and proud,
With ease was ripened to the work of blood.
More deeply still to veil the dark design,
By nuptial bands he made his sister mine.[1]
Oh, bands accursed, and Hymen's rites profaned,
By heaven in anger for our curse ordained,
Whose baleful torch, dire omen of our doom,
Blazed but to lead me to a mother's tomb.

[1] Margaret of Valois, sister of Charles IX., was married to Henry IV. in 1572, a few days before the massacre.

Though I have suffered let me still be just,
Nor blame thee, Medici, but where I must,
Suspicions, though on reason firmly built,
I scorn, nor need them to enhance thy guilt.
But Albret[1] died—forgive these tears I shed,
Due to the fond remembrance of the dead.
Meanwhile the dreadful hour in swift career,
Big with the queen's vindictive wrath, drew near.
Night's gloomy mantle thrown o'er earth and heaven,
Silent and still the appointed sign was given.
The moon, pale regent, faltered on her way,[2]
And sickening seemed to quench her feeble ray.
Coligny slept, and largely o'er his head
The drowsy power had all his influence shed.
Sudden unnumbered shrieks dispelled the charm,
His railying senses felt the dread alarm;
He waked, looked forth, and saw the assassin throng
With murderous strides march hastily along:
Saw on their arms the quivering torch-light play,
His palace fired, a nation in dismay,
His bleeding household stifled in the flames,
While all the savage host around exclaims,
"Let not compassion check your righteous hands,
'Tis God, 'tis Medici, 'tis Charles commands."
Now his own name shrill echoing rends the skies,

[1] Jeanne d'Albret, mother of Henry IV., who was drawn to Paris with the rest of the Huguenots, died almost suddenly between the marriage of her son and the feast of St. Bartholomew; but Caillart, her physician, and Desnœuds, her surgeon, both zealous Protestants, who opened her body, found no marks of poison upon it.

[2] It was on the night between August 23 and 24, being the feast of St. Bartholomew in 1572, that this bloody tragedy was executed.

And now far off Teligny[1] he descries,
Teligny, famed for every virtuous grace,
Whose truth had earned his daughter's chaste embrace,
Hope of his cause, and honor of his race.
The bleeding youth by ruffians' force conveyed,
With outstretched arms demands his instant aid.
Helpless, unarmed, he saw his fate decreed,
Saw that his blood must unavenged be shed;
Yet bravely anxious for renown achieved,
Wished but to die the hero he had lived.
Already the tumultuous band explore
His own recess, and thunder at the door.
Instant he flings it wide, and meets the foe
With eye untroubled, and majestic brow,
Such as in battle with deliberate breast,
Serene, he urged the slaughter, or repressed.
Awful and sage he stood, his gracious form
Quelled the loud tumult, and controlled the storm.
"Finish, my friends, your fatal task," he said,
"Bathe in my freezing blood this hoary head,
These locks, which yet full many a boisterous year
E'en the rough chance of war has deigned to spare.
Strike, and strike deep; be satisfied and know
With my last breath I can forgive the blow,
The mean desire of life my soul abjures,
Yet happier! might I die, defending yours."
The savage band grown human at his words,
Clasping his knees let fall their idle swords;

[1] The Count de Teligny, ten months before, had married the daughter of the admiral. He had so much sweetness in his countenance, that they who came first to kill him relented at the sight, but others more barbarous did the business.

Prone on the ground his pardoning grace implore,
And at his feet repentant sorrows pour;
He in the midst, like some loved monarch rose,
Theme of his subjects' praise, and idol of their vows.
When Besme,[1] impatient for his destined prey,
Rushed headlong in, enraged at their delay;
Furious he saw the deed unfinished yet,
And each assassin trembling at his feet.
No change in him this scene of sorrow wrought,
Hard and unfeeling still, the caitiff thought,
Whoe'er relented at Coligny's fate,
Was the queen's foe, a rebel to the State.
Athwart the crowd he breaks impetuous way,
Firm stands the chief, unconscious of dismay,
Deep in his side the fierce barbarian struck
The fatal steel, but with averted look,
Lest at a glance that eye's resistless charm
Should freeze his purpose and unnerve his arm.
Such was the brave Coligny's mournful end;
Affront and outrage e'en his death attend,[2]
The ravening hawk and vulture hover round
His mangled limbs, still festering on the ground.
At the queen's feet his sacred head is thrown,
A conquest worthy both herself and son.
With brow unaltered and serene she sate,

[1] Besme was a German, a domestic of the house of Guise. This wretch being afterward taken by the Protestants, the Rochellers offered a price for him that they might tear him to pieces in the great square, but he was killed by a person named Bretanville.

[2] They suspended the admiral by the feet with an iron chain to the gibbet of Montfaucon. Charles IX. went, together with his court, to enjoy this horrid spectacle. One of his courtiers saying that the body of Coligny had an ill smell, the king answered like Vitellius: "The body of an enemy slain smells always well."

Nor seemed t'enjoy the victim of her hate;
To veil her secret thoughts so well she knew,
Such presents seemed familiar to her view.
Vain were the task and endless to recite
Each horrid scene of that disastrous night;
Coligny's death served only to presage
Our future woes, an earnest of their rage.
Legions of bigots, flushed with fiery zeal
And frantic ardor, shake the murdering steel;
Proudly they march where heaps of slaughter rise,
Unsated vengeance sparkling in their eyes.
Guise[1] in the van full many a victim paid
Indignant, to his father's injured shade;
Their leaders animate the troops aloud,
And chafe to madness the deluded crowd;
Long registers of death's foredoomed display,
And guide the poniard to its destined prey.
The tumult I omit, the deafening screams,
The blood that floated in promiscuous streams;
How on his father's corpse struck rudely down,
Convulsed with anguish fell the expiring son;
How when the flames had split the mouldering wall,
It crushed the cradled infant in its fall:
Events like these we view with less surprise,
For still they mark the track where human frenzy flies.
But stranger far, what few will e'er believe
In future ages, or yourself conceive,
The barbarous rout, whose hearts with added fire,
Those holy savages, their priests, inspire;

[1] This was Henry, Duke of Guise, surnamed Balafré, who was slain at Blois. He was the brother of Duke Francis, who was assassinated by Poltrot.

Even from the carnage call upon the Lord,
And waving high in air the reeking sword,
Offer aloud to God the sacrifice abhorred.
What numerous heroes in that havoc died!
Renel[1] and brave Pardaillan by his side,
Guerchy[2] and wise Lavardin, worthy well
A longer life and gentler fortune, fell,
Among the wretches, whom that night of woe
Plunged in the gloom of endless night below,
Marsillac[3] and Soubise,[4] marked down for death,
Defended stoutly their devoted breath,
'Till all with labor wearied and foredone,
Close to the Louvre's gate pushed roughly on,
While to their king with suppliant voice they cry,
Deaf to their prayers, he hears not, and they die.
High on the roof the royal fury stood,
At leisure feasting on the scenes of blood,
Her cruel minions watch the gloomy host,
And mark the spot where slaughter rages most;

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[1] Anthony of Clermont-Renel, as he was shaving himself in his shirt, was massacred by the son of the Baron des Adrets, and by his own cousin, Bussy d'Amboise. The Marquis of Pardaillan was slain at his side.

[2] Guerchy defended himself a long time in the street, and slew many of the assassins till he was overpowered by numbers; but the Marquis of Lavardin had not time to draw his sword.

[3] Marsillac was a favorite of Charles IX., and had spent part of the night with him. The king had some inclination to save him, and had himself commanded him to sleep in the Louvre; but at length he let him depart, saying: "I see plainly it is God's will that he should perish."

[4] Soubise was so called because he had married the heiress of that family. His own name was Dupont-Quellence. He defended himself a long time, and fell covered with wounds under the queen's window. The ladies flocked thither to see his body, naked and bloody as it was, with a savage curiosity, worthy of that abominable court.

Brave chiefs! triumphant only in their shame,
They saw their country blaze, and gloried in the flame.

Oh, scandal to the name of king revered![1]
Himself, the monarch, joins the felon herd;
Himself the trembling fugitives pursues,
And even his sacred hands in blood imbrues.
This Valois, too, whose cause I now support,
Who comes by me, a suppliant to your court,
Shared in his brother's guilt an impious part,
And roused the flames of vengeance in his heart;
Nor yet is Valois fierce, of savage mood,
Or prone by nature to delight in blood;
But on his youth those dire examples wrought,
And weakness, more than malice, was his fault.

A few there were whom vengeance sought in vain,
Who escaped unhurt among the thousands slain.
Caumont![2] thy fortune, thy auspicious fate,
Ages unborn with wonder shall relate.
The hoary sire between his sons reposed,
His aged eyes in needful slumber closed,
One bed sufficed them all; when rushing in
The fell destroyers marred the peaceful scene,
With hasty strokes their poniards plunging round,
They deal a random death at every wound.
But He, whose mercies o'er our fate preside,
Can waft with ease the threatening hour aside;

[1] I have heard the last Marshal of Fessé assert, that in his youth he knew an old man ninety years of age, who had been page to Charles IX., and who had often told him, that he himself loaded the carbine with which the king fired upon his Protestant subjects, the night of St. Bartholomew.

[2] De Caumont, who escaped the massacre, was the famous Marshal de la Force, who afterward gained such great reputation, and lived to the age of fourscore and four years.

Through very zeal to slay, they spare the son,
And not a trace of mischief reached Caumont.
A hand unseen was stretched in his defence,
And screened from harm his infant innocence;
Pierced with a thousand murders, to their force
His father still opposed his bleeding corse,
And a whole nation's ardor to destroy
Eluding, twice gave being to his boy.
Me to sweet sleep resigned, and balmy rest,
No fear alarmed, no jealousy possessed;
Deep in the Louvre at that dreadful hour,
Far from the din of arms I slept secure:
But oh! what scenes my waking eyes surveyed,
Grim death in all its horrid pomp arrayed,
Porches and porticoes were deluged o'er,
With crimson streams, and stood in pools of gore;
My friends still bleeding, my domestics slain,
The truest, best, and dearest of my train.
Already at my bed the villains stand
Prepared, already lift the murdering hand;
My life hangs wavering on a point, I wait
The final stroke, and yield me to my fate.
But whether reverence of their ancient lords,
The blood of Bourbon, checked their daring swords;
Whether ingenious to torment, the queen
Held Henry's life a sacrifice too mean;
Or wisely spared it, to secure alone
In future storms, a shelter for her own;
Instead of death, at once to set me free,
Chains and a dungeon were her stern decree.
Far happier was the fate Coligny shared,
His life alone her treacherous arts ensnared,
The hero's freedom still, and glory unimpaired.

I see Eliza shares in the distress,
Though half the sad recital I suppress.
It seemed as from the queen's malignant eye
All France had caught the signal to destroy;
Swift from the capital on every side
Death o'er the kingdom stretched his banners wide.
Kings in their vengeance are too well obeyed;
Whole armies blindly lend their impious aid;
France floats in blood, and all her rivers sweep
Upon their purple tides, the carnage to the deep.

CANTO III.

The Argument.

The hero continues the history of the civil wars of France. The unfortunate death of Charles IX. Reign of Henry III. His character. That of the famous Duke of Guise, known by the name of Balafré. Battle of Coutras. Murder of the Duke of Guise. Extremities to which Henry III. is reduced. Mayenne at the head of the League. D'Aumale the hero of it. Reconciliation of Henry III., and Henry, King of Navarre. Queen Elizabeth's answer to Henry de Bourbon.

When many a day (for thus the fates ordained)
With blackest deeds of murder had been stained;
When each assassin cruel, and abhorred,
Fatigued with crimes, had sheathed his glutted sword;
Those crimes at length the factious crowd alarmed
Whom zeal had blinded and their sovereign armed.
As rage subsided, melting pity moved
Each friend to virtue who his country loved;
Her plaintive voice awakened softer cares,
And Charles himself relented at her tears.
That early culture, by ill fate designed
To blast the fairer blossoms of his mind,
Conscience subdued—her whispering voice alone
Can shake with terror the securest throne.
Not all his mother's principles could frame
A heart like hers, insensible of shame.
Severe remorse his anxious soul dismayed,

His strength was wasted, and his youth decayed.
Heaven marked him out in vengeance for his crimes,
A dread example to succeeding times.
Myself was present at his latest breath,
And still I shudder at that scene of death,
When, in return for tides of Gallic blood,
Each bursting vein poured forth the crimson flood.[1]
Thus fell lamented in his early prime
A youthful monarch bred to every crime,
From whose repentance we had hoped to gain
The balmy blessings of a milder reign.
Soon as he died, with speed advancing forth
From the bleak bosom of the wintry North
Great Valois came, like some bright Orient star,
To claim his birthright in these realms of war.
On him Polonia had bestowed her throne,[2]
Deemed by each province worthy of the crown.
Great are the dangers of too bright a name,
E'en Valois sank beneath the weight of fame:
Though in his cause each danger I defy,
Could toil forever, and with transport die,
Yet, heaven-born truth, this tongue thy accents loves,
And praises only what the heart approves.
Soon was the race of all his greatness run;
As morning vapors fly before the sun.
Oft have I marked these changes, often seen,

[1] He never enjoyed his health after the affair of St. Bartholomew, and died about two years afterward, May 30, 1574, covered with his own blood, which gushed out from every pore.

[2] The reputation he had acquired at Jarnac and Montcontour, supported by French coin, had gained him the election as King of Poland in 1573. He succeeded Sigismund II., the last prince of the race of the Jagellons.

Heroes and kings become the weakest men:
Have seen the laurelled prince in battle brave
Wear the soft chain, and live a courtier's slave.
This fact by long experience have I known,
Seeds of true courage in the mind are sown.
Valois was formed by heaven's peculiar care
For martial prowess, and the deeds of war:
Yet was too weak the rod of power to wield,
Though great in arms and steady in the field.
Detested minions showed their artful skill,
And reigned supreme the sovereigns of his will.
His voice but dictated their own decrees;
Whilst they, indulging in voluptuous ease,
Drank of each joy which luxury supplies,
And scorned to listen to a nation's cries.
Unmoved beheld afflicted France lament
Her strength exhausted, and her treasures spent.
Beneath their yoke whilst Valois tamely bowed,
And new oppressions from new taxes flowed,
Lo Guise[1] appears! ambition spurs him on,
All eyes are fixed upon this rising sun.
His deeds of war, the glory of his race,
His manly beauty, and attractive grace;
But more than all, that happy, pleasing art,
Which wins our love, and steals upon the heart,
Subdued e'en those whom virtue faintly warms,
And gained their wishes by resistless charms.
None e'er like him could lead the mind astray,
Or rule the passions with more sovereign sway.

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[1] Henry de Guise; surnamed Balafré: born in 1550, of Francis de Guise and Anne d'Este. He executed the grand project of the League formed by his uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and begun by Francis, his father.

None e'er concealed from busy, curious eyes,
Their dark intentions in so fair disguise.
Though proud ambition kindled in his soul,
His cooler judgment could that pride control.
To gain the crowd, and win deserved esteem,
Detested levies were his daily theme.
Oft have they heard his flattering tongue declare
The public sorrows were his only care.
On modest worth he lavished all his store,
Or clothed the naked, or enriched the poor.
Oft would his alms prevent the starting tear,
And tell that Guise and charity were near.
All arts were tried which cunning might afford,
To court the nobles whom his soul abhorred.
Alike to virtue, as to vice inclined.
Or love, or endless hatred ruled his mind.
He braved all dangers which on arms await,
No chief more bold, none more oppressed the State.
When time at length had made his influence strong,
And fixed the passions of the giddy throng;
Stripped of disguise unmasked the traitor shone,
Defied his sovereign, and attacked the throne.
Within our walls the fatal League began,
And next through France the dire contagion ran.
Nursed by all ranks the hideous monster stood,
Pregnant with woes, and rioting in blood.
Two monarchs ruled o'er Gallia's hapless land:
This shared alone the shadow of command;
That wide diffused fierce war's destructive flame,
Master of all things save the royal name.
Valois awaked the threatening danger sees,
And quits the slumbers of lethargic ease.
But still to ease, and indolence a prey,

His eyes are dazzled by the blaze of day.
Though o'er his head the stormy thunders roll,
Nor storms, nor thunders rouse his sluggish soul.
Sweet to his taste the streams of pleasure flow,
And sleep conceals the precipice below.
Myself remained, the next succeeding heir,
To save the monarch, or his ruin share:
Eager I flew his weakness to supply;
Firmly resolved to conquer, or to die.
But Guise, alas! that sly, dissembling fiend,
By craft deprived him of his truest friend.
That old pretence through all revolving time,
Divine religion, veiled the horrid crime.
The busy crowd fictitious virtue warmed,
With zeal inspired them, and with fury armed.
Before their eyes in lively tints he drew
That ancient worship which their fathers knew.
From new-born sects declared what ills had flowed,
And painted Bourbon as a foe to God.
"Through all your climes, forbid it heaven!" he said,
"His tenets flourish, and his errors spread.
Yon walls, that cast a sacred horror round,
Will soon be sunk, and levelled with the ground.
Soon will you see unhallowed temples rise,
And point their airy summits to the skies.
So loved by Bourbon, so adored has been
The cursed example of Britannia's queen."
Scarce had he spoke when lo! the public fear
Was swiftly wafted to the royal ear.
Nay, more, the Leaguers issue Rome's decree,
And curse the monarch that unites with me.
Now was this arm prepared to strike the blow,
Pour forth its strength, and thunder on the foe;

When Valois, won by subtle, dark intrigue,
Fixed on my ruin, and obeyed the League.
Unnumbered soldiers armed in dread array
Filled every plain, and spoke the king's dismay.
With grief I saw such jealousy disclosed,
Bewailed his weakness, and his power opposed.
A thousand states were lavish of supplies,
Each passing hour beheld new armies rise,
Led on by fierce Joyeuse and well instructed Guise.
Guise, formed alike for prudence as for war,
Dispersed my friends, and baffled all their care.
Still undismayed, such strength my valor boasts,
I pressed through myriads of embattled hosts.
Through all the field I fought the proud Joyeuse—
But stay—the rest Eliza will excuse.
More of that chief 'twere needless to relate,
You've heard his end, and fame has spread his fate.
"Not so," the queen with eagerness replied,
"Well hast thou spoke with modesty thy guide;
But deign to tell me what I wish to hear,
Such themes are worthy of Eliza's ear:
Joyeuse his fall in vivid colors draw;
Go on, and paint thy conquest at Coutras."
Touched with these words the hero hung his head;
An honest blush his manly cheek o'erspread.
Pausing a while, the tale he thus led on,
Yet wished the glory any but his own.
Of all, who Valois could by flattery move,
Who nursed his weakness, and enjoyed his love
Joyeuse illustrious best deserved to share
The fairest sunshine of his royal care.
If to his years the stern decree of fate
Had fixed some period of a longer date,

In noble exploits had his virtue shone,
And Guise's greatness not excelled his own.
But vice o'er virtue gained superior force,
Court was his cradle, luxury his nurse:
Yet dared the amorous chieftain to oppose
Unskilful valor to experienced foes.
From pleasure's downy lap the courtiers came
To guard his person, and to share his fame.
In gay attire each gallant youth was dressed;
Some cipher glittered on each martial vest,
Some dear distinction, such as lovers wear,
To tell the fondness of the yielding fair.
The costly sapphire, or the diamond's rays,
O'er their rich armor shed the vivid blaze.
Thus decked by folly, thus elate and vain,
These troops of Venus issued to the plain.
Swift marched their ranks, as tumult led the way,
Unwisely brave, and impotently gay.
In Bourbon's camp, disdaining empty show,
Far other scenes were opened to the view:
An army, silent as the dead of night,
Displayed its forces well inured to fight;
Men gray in arms, and disciplined to blood,
Who bravely suffered for their country's good.
The only graces, that employed their care,
Were swords well pointed, and the dress of war.
Like them arrayed, and steady to my trust,
I led the squadrons covered o'er with dust.
Like them ten thousand deaths I dared to face,
Distinguished only by my rank and place.
These eyes beheld the brilliant foe o'erthrown,
Expiring legions, and the field our own.
Deep in their breasts I plunged the fatal spear,

And wished some Spanish bosom had been there.
Still shall my tongue their honest praises tell;
Firm at his post each youthful courtier fell,
And bravely struggled to his latest breath
Amidst the terrors of surrounding death.
Our silken sons of pleasure and of ease
Preserve their valor in the midst of peace.
Called forth to war, they bravely scorn to yield,
Servile at court, but heroes in the field.
Joyeuse, alas! I tried, in vain, to save;
None heard the orders which my mercy gave.
Too soon I saw him sunk to endless night,
Sustained by kind associates in the fight,
A pale and breathless corpse, all ghastly to the sight.
Thus some fair stem, whose opening flowers display
Their fragrant bosoms to the dawn of day,
Which decks the early scene, and fresh appears
With zephyrs' kisses, and Aurora's tears,
Too soon decays, on nature's lap reclined,
Cropped by the scythe, or scattered by the wind.
But why should memory recall to view
Those horrid triumphs to oblivion due?
Conquests so gained forever cease to charm,
Whilst Gallic blood still blushes on my arm.
Those beams of grandeur with false lustre shone,
And tears bedew the laurels which I won.
Unhappy Valois! that ill-fated day
Showered down on thee dishonor and dismay.
Paris grew proud, the League's submission less,
And Guise's glory doubled thy distress.
Vimori's plains saw Guise the sword unsheath,
Germania suffered for Joyeuse's death.
Auneau beheld my army of allies

Yield to his power, defeated by surprise.
Through Paris' streets he marched with haughty air,
Arrayed in laurels, and the pride of war.
E'en Valois tamely to his insults bowed,
And served this idol of the gazing crowd.
Shame will at length the coolest courage warm,
And give new vigor to the weakest arm.
Such vile affronts made Valois less incline
To offer incense at so mean a shrine.
Too late he tried his greatness to restore,
And reign the monarch he had lived before.
Now deemed a tyrant by the factious crew,
Nor loyal fear nor love his subjects knew.
All Paris arms, sedition spreads the flame,
And headstrong mutiny asserts her claim.
Encircling troops raise high the hostile mound,
Besiege his palace, and his guards surround.
Guise undisturbed, amidst the raging storm,
Gave it a milder, or severer form:
Ruled the mad tumult of rebellious spleen,
And guided, as he pleased, the great machine.
All had been lost; and Valois doomed to die
By one command, one glance of Guise's eye;
But when each arm was ready for the blow,
Compassion soothed the fierceness of the foe;
Enough were deemed the terrors of the fight,
And meek-eyed pity gave the power of flight.
Guise greatly erred, such subjects all things dare,
Their king must perish, or themselves despair.
This day confirmed, and strengthened in his schemes,
He saw that all was fatal but extremes:
Himself must mount the scaffold, or the throne,

The lord of all things, or the lord of none.
Through Gallia's realms adored, from conquest vain,
Aided by Rome, and seconded by Spain;
Pregnant with hope, and absolute in power,
He thought those iron ages to restore,
When erst our kings in mouldering cloisters lived,
In early infancy of crowns deprived.
In hallowed shades they wept the hours away,
Whilst tyrants governed with oppressive sway.
Valois, indignant at so high a crime,
Delayed his vengeance to some better time.
Our states at Blois were summoned to appear,
And fame, no doubt, has told you what they were.
In barren streams from oratory's tongue
Smooth flowed the tide of eloquence along;
Laws were proposed whose power none e'er perceived,
And ills lamented which none e'er relieved.
Guise in the midst, with high imperious pride,
Was vainly seated by his sovereign's side.
Sure of success, he saw around the throne,
Or thought he saw, no subjects but his own.
These sons of infamy, this venal band
Was ready to bestow the dear command,
When Valois's power was destined to appear,
And burst the chains of mercy and of fear.
Each day his rival studied to attain
The mean, the odious triumphs of disdain;
Nor deemed that ever such a prince could show
Those stern resolves which strike the assassin's blow.
Fate o'er his eyes with envious hand had spread
Her thickest veil's impenetrable shade.
The hour arrived when Guise was doomed to bear

That lot of nature which all mortals share.
Disgraced with wounds before the royal eye
The mighty victim was condemned to die.
All pale, and covered by the crimson tide,
This sun descended in his native pride.
The parting soul, by thirst of glory fired,
In life's last moments to the throne aspired.
Thus fell the powerful chief,[1] assemblage rare
Of foulest vices, and perfections fair.
With other conduct than to kings belongs,
Did Valois suffer, and avenge his wrongs.
Soon did the dire report through Paris spread,
That heaven was injured, and that Guise was dead.
The young, the old, with unavailing sighs
Displayed their grief, and joined their plaintive cries.
The softer sex invoked the powers above,
And clasped his statues in the arms of love.
All Paris thought her father and her God
Called loud for vengeance, and inspired to blood.
Amidst the rest, the brave and valiant Mayenne
Sought not their zealous fury to restrain:
But more by interest than resentment moved,
The flame augmented, and their zeal approved.
Mayenne, under Guise inured to war's alarms,
Was nursed in battle, and trained up to arms:
His brother's equal in each dark intrigue,
And now the lord and glory of the League.
Thus highly raised, thus eminently great;
He grieved no longer for his brother's fate:
But better pleased to govern, than obey,

[1] He was assassinated in the king's antechamber at Blois, on Friday, Dec. 23, 1588.

Forgot the loss, and wiped his tears away.
Mayenne, with a soul to generous deeds inclined,
A statesman's cunning, and a hero's mind,
By subtle arts unnumbered followers draws
To yield him homage, and to serve his laws.
Skilful e'en good from evil to produce,
Full well he knows their talents and their use.
Though brighter splendors dazzled all our eyes,
Not greater dangers ever rose from Guise.
To young Aumale, and this more prudent guide,
The Leaguers owe their courage and their pride.
Aumale, the *great invincible* by name,
Is high exalted in the lists of fame.
Through all their ranks he spreads ambition's fires,
Presumptuous valor, and his own desires.
Unshaken in their cause the League protects,
And bravely executes what Mayenne directs.
Meantime, the king, whose power the Germans dread,
To deeds inhuman from his cradle bred;
That tyrant Catholic, that artful foe,
Incensed at Bourbon, and Eliza too:
Ambitious Philip sends his warlike train
To aid our rivals, and the cause of Mayenne.
Rome, best employed in making wars to cease,
Lights Discord's torch, and bids her fires increase.
The same fierce views the Christian father owns,
Points the keen blade, and animates his sons.
From Europe's either end the torrent falls:
Uniting sorrows burst upon our walls.
Weak, and defenceless in this evil hour
Valois relented, and implored my power.
Humane benevolence my soul approves,

The state commiserates, and Valois loves.
Impending dangers banish all my ire,
A brother's safety is my sole desire.
With honest zeal I labor for his good:
'Tis duty calls me, and the ties of blood.
I know the royal dignity my own,
And vindicate the honors of the crown.
Nor treaty made, nor hostage asked I came,
And told him, courage was his guide to fame.
On Paris' ramparts bid him cast his eye,
And there resolve to conquer, or to die.
These friendly words, thus happily applied,
Through all his soul diffused a generous pride.
Manners thus changed, thus resolutely brave,
The sense of shame, and not example gave.
The serious lessons, which misfortune brings,
Are needful often, and of use to kings.
Thus Henry spoke with honesty of heart,
And begged for succors on Eliza's part.
Now from the towers where rebel Discord stood,
Conquest recalls him to her scenes of blood.
The flower of England follows to the plain,
And cleaves the bosom of the azure main.
Essex commands—the proud Iberian knows
That Essex conquers e'en the wisest foes;
Full little deeming that injurious fate
Should blast his laurels with her keenest hate.
To France brave Henry hastens to repair,
Eager to grace the theatre of war.
"Go," said the queen, "thyself, and virtue please;
My troops attend thee o'er the azure seas.
For thee, not Valois, they endure the fight;
Thy cares must guard them, and defend their right.

From thy example will they scorn to swerve;
And rather seem to imitate, than serve.
Who now the sword for valiant Bourbon draws
Will learn to triumph in Britannia's cause.
Oh! may thy power the factious Leaguers quell,
And Mayenne's allies thy gallant conquests feel!
Spain is too weak thy rebel foes to save,
And Roman thunders never awe the brave.
Go, free mankind, and break the iron chains
Where Sixtus governs, or where Philip reigns.
The cruel Philip, artful as his sire
In all that views of interest may require,
Though less renowned in war, less great and brave,
Division spreads in order to enslave;
Forms in his palace each ambitious scheme,
And boundless triumph is his darling theme.
"Lo! Sixtus raised from nothing to the throne,[1]
Designs more haughty blushes not to own.
Montalto's shepherd monarchs would o'ercome,
And dictate laws in Paris, as at Rome:
Safe in the honors which adorn his brow,
To Philip, and to all mankind a foe:
As serves his cause, or insolent, or meek,
Rival of kings, and tyrant o'er the weak.
Through every clime, with faction at their head,
E'en to our court his dark intrigues have spread.
These mighty rulers fear not to defy;
They both have dared Eliza's power to try:
Witness, ye seas! how Philip fought in vain
'Gainst English valor, and the stormy main.
These shores beheld the proud Armada lost;

[1] Pope Sixtus V., who from having been a shepherd's boy rose to the Papal throne.

Yon purple billows bore the floating host.
Rome's pontiff still in quiet silence bears
The loss of conquest, and our greatness fears.
"Display thy banners in the martial field;
When Mayenne is conquered, Rome herself will yield.
Though proud when fortune smiles, her own defeat
Lays her submissive at the victor's feet.
Prompt to condemn, and eager to absolve,
Her flames and thunders wait on thy resolve."

CANTO IV.

The Argument.

D'Aumale is on the point of being master of the camp of Henry III., when the hero, returning from England, engages the Leaguers and changes the fortune of the day.

Discord comforts Mayenne, and flies to Rome for aid. Description of Rome. Discord meets with Policy. She returns with her to Paris, causes an insurrection of the Sorbonne; animates the Sixteen against the parliament, and arms the monks. Troubles and confusion in Paris.

While thus sequestered from the train of State,
Their glorious interests sagely they debate,
At leisure o'er the princely science stray,
Combat and conquest and imperial sway,
The Seine with terror saw the chiefs combined
Spread on his banks their banners to the wind.
Anxious the king, from Henry distant far,
Bewailed the uncertain destiny of war;
His cheering aid irresolute he needs,
For victory follows still where Bourbon leads.
With triumph the confederate bands beheld
His weak dismay, and eager sought the field;
Chilled every dreadful hour with fresh alarms,
He saw the o'erwhelming torrent of their arms,
And prone to change, and hasty to repent,
Regrets his absence whom himself had sent.
'Long with these traitors to their lawful lord,

Joyeuse's brother[1] drew the factious sword;
By turns a soldier and a saint was he,
Now all for arms, and now a devotee,
Preferred, as when inclined his wavering soul,
One hour the helmet, and the next the cowl.
He left the scenes of penitence and tears,
To bark sedition in the Leaguers' ears,
And bathed remorseless in his country's blood,
The hand just then devoted to his God.

Of all the chiefs for valor most renowned,
Whose prowess shed despair and horror round,
Whose puissant arms the boldest might appall,
The first in feats of glory was d'Aumale.[2]
Sprung from the far-famed heroes of Lorraine,
King, laws, and peace alike were his disdain;
The noblest youths his daring steps pursue,
With them incessant to the field he flew,
Now in still march, now shouting from afar,

[1] Henry, Count of Bouchage, younger brother of the Duke of Joyeuse, slain at Coutras. Once as he was passing by the convent of the Capuchins at Paris, at four o'clock in the morning, after having spent the night in a debauch, he fancied he heard the angels singing matins in the convent. Struck with this idea, he made himself a Capuchin, by the name of "Brother Angel." Afterward, when he quitted the cowl, and took up arms against Henry IV., the Duke of Mayenne made him governor of Languedoc, duke and peer and marshal of France. At length he came to an accommodation with the king: but as he was one day standing with his majesty in a balcony, under which a great multitude were assembled, the king said to him; "Cousin, these people seem delighted with seeing an apostate and a renegade together." This speech of Henry's sent him again to his convent, where he died.

[2] The Chevalier d'Aumale, brother of the Duke d'Aumale, of the house of Lorraine, a young man of impetuous spirit, with many shining qualities; he headed all the sallies during the siege of Paris, and inspired the inhabitants with his own courage and confidence.

By day, by night, he urged the varying war,
Assailed the unguarded foe on every side,
And with their blood the dusty champaign dyed.
So from proud Athos or Imaus' height,
Where earth, sea, air lie stretched before the sight,
With headlong speed the rapid eagle flies,
And vultures dart along the gloomy skies;
With hungry beaks the feathered spoil they rend,
Resistless on the bleating flocks descend,
And soaring to their airy cliffs convey
With screams of cruel joy, the living prey.
Fired on a time and frantic with the thirst
Of glory, to the royal tent he pierced;
Dark was the night and sudden the surprise,
Around the camp a panic horror flies;
The torrent of his arms o'erlooks the mound,
And the big deluge threatens all around.
But when the day-star raised his glimmering urn,
Came Mornay to announce his lord's return;
With joyful speed the impatient chief drew near,
When the rough din smote loudly on his ear,
Amazed he flies, sees terror and distress
In the king's troops, nor even in Bourbon's less,
"And are you vanquished, and is this," he cried,
"Is this the glorious welcome you provide
For Henry, for your Henry?" At that name
Their hearts were flushed again with valor's glowing flame.
So when the Sabine arms drove trembling home,
Even to the capital, the bands of Rome,
His guardian god their mighty founder hailed,
And in the name of Stator Jove prevailed.
"Let him," they cry, "let Henry lead the fight,

And we must conquer in our Henry's sight."
Keen as the flash that cleaves the stormy cloud,
In the mid camp the dazzling hero stood,
Impetuous to the foremost ranks he flies,
Death in his hand, and lightning in his eyes;
The ambitious chiefs crowd fast around his shield,
At once he shifts the fortune of the field,
His stern approach the pale confederates shun,
As stars diminished fade before the sun.
D'Aumale enraged tries every art in vain
To rally their disordered files again;
His voice a while their timorous flight withheld,
But Henry's drove them headlong o'er the field;
His awful front strikes terror through the foe,
Their chief unites them, and their fears o'erthrow:
'Till even d'Aumale reluctant borne along
Obeys the o'erwhelming torrent of the throng.
Incumbered thus with many a winter's snow,
Some rock forsakes the mountain's lofty brow,
And wrapt in sheets of ice, rolls o'er the vale below.
He shows to the besieging powers around
His front so long with matchless glory crowned,
Bursts through the multitude, and loathing life,
Seeks in despair once more the mortal strife;
Restrains a while the victor's rapid course,
'Till weak, and baffled by superior force,
Each moment he expects the fatal meed,
Death, the just wages of his hardy deed.
But Discord, for her darling chief afraid,
Flies swift to save him, for she needs his aid,
Between her champion and the foe, she held
Her massy, broad, impenetrable shield,
Whose sight, or rage, or terror can convey,

Omen of death, and meteor of dismay.
Offspring of Hell! from her infernal cave
Then first she came, to succor and to save,
Then first her hand, dire instrument of death,
Redeemed from instant fate a hero's breath.
Forth from the field, her minion, covered o'er
With wounds unfelt amid his toil, she bore,
His anguish with a lenient hand allayed,
And staunched the blood that in her cause was shed.
But while her labors to his limbs impart
Their wonted health, her venom taints his heart.
Thus tyrants oft, with treacherous pity, stay
The wretched doom, and spare but to betray;
Act by his arm the purpose of their hate
And dark revenge, then yield him to his fate.
Bold to achieve, nor fraught with wisdom less
To catch the auspicious moment of success,
Victorious Henry urged the important blow,
And with new fury pressed the astonished foe.
Close in their walls their dire disgrace they mourn,
And dread the assault, and tremble in their turn.
Even Valois now, to martial deeds inspired
The troops, himself by Henry's actions fired;
Laughs at all pain, despises all alarms,
And owns even toil and danger have their charms.
No secret feuds the jarring chiefs confound,
Their brave attempts were all with glory crowned;
Horror, where'er they march, their way prepares,
The ramparts tremble, and the foe despairs.
Where now shall Mayenne deep sorrowing seek redress,
His troops, a people groaning in distress!
The weeping orphan here her sire demands,

There brethren claim their brother at his hands;
Each mourns the present, dreads the future most,
And disaffection rends the murmuring host.
Some counsel flight, surrender some prefer,
But all renounce unanimous the war;
So light the feeble vulgar, and so near
Their headstrong rashness is allied to fear.
Their ruin he beheld already wrought,
A thousand plans perplex his laboring thought;
When Discord by her snaky locks confessed,
Stood forth revealed and thus the chief addressed:
"August descendant of an awful line,
Whose vengeful cause unites thee firm to mine;
Formed by my counsel, nursed beneath my care,
Know thy protectress, and her voice revere.
Shall wretches base as these thy fears excite,
Who freeze with horror at a loss so slight?
Slaves of my power, and vassals of my will,
Even now our great designs they shall fulfil;
Let but my breath their dastard bosoms fire,
They court the combat, and with joy expire."
She spoke, and rapid as the lightning's flight,
Glanced through the clouds, and vanished from his sight.
Around the French she saw confusion lower,
And hailed the sight, and blessed the welcome hour;
The teeming earth grew barren as she passed,
And the bright blossoms withered at the blast;
Flat in the furrow lies the blighted ear,
Pale and half quenched the sickening stars appear;
Beneath her bursts the thunder's sullen sound,
And death-like horror seized the nations round.
Dark scowling o'er the flowery vales below,

A whirlwind snatched her to the banks of Po.
Toward Rome at length her baleful eye she rolled,
Rome, the world's dread, and Discord's fane of old,
Imperial Rome, by destiny designed,
In peace, in war, the mistress of mankind.
By conquest first she stretched her wide domain,
And all earth's monarchs wore her galling chain;
On arms alone her solid empire grew,
And the world crouched where'er her eagle flew.
More peaceful art her modern rule supports,
Now even her conquerors tremble in her courts;
Deep rooted in their hearts her power she sees,
And needs no thunder but her own decrees.
High on that gorgeous wreck of ancient war,
Where Mars for ages drove his rattling car,
A pontiff now maintains his priestly state,
And fills the throne where once the Cæsars sate.
There wandering heedless of the mighty dead,
Monastic feet on Cato's ashes tread,
On God's own altar there the throne they raise,
And one despotic hand the cross and sceptre sways.
There first His infant Church the Almighty placed,
By turns with zeal rejected, or embraced;
There heaven's high will His first apostle taught,
In native truth and singleness of thought.
Scarce meaner praise his successors acquired,
And they were honored most, who least aspired;
No foppery then their modest brow adorned,
All praise but virtue, and all wealth they scorned,
And flew with rapture from their low abode,
To die triumphant in the cause of God.
Depraved at length they scorned their humble state,

And heaven, for man's offences, made them great;
Ambition then profaned the sacred shrine
And human power was grafted on divine;
The lurking dagger and the poisoning bowl
Were the dark basis of their new control.
Vicegerents of the Lord, His holy place
With brutal lust they blushed not to disgrace,
Till Rome, oppressed beneath their hateful reign,
Sighed for her idol gods and pagan rites again.
A wiser race more modern times beheld,
Who crimes like these or wrought not or concealed:
Then kings appealed to Rome's decisive power,
And chose their umpire, whom they feared before;
Humility once more and meekness shone
Renewed, beneath the proud pontific crown.
But pious fraud and priestcraft in these days
Are Rome's chief virtue, and her worthiest praise.

Now in the pomp of apostolic state
Supreme, and crowned with empire, Sixtus[1] sate;
If fraud and churlish insolence might claim
Renown, no monarch bore a fairer name.
Long time he skulked beneath the driveller's part
Disguised, and owed his greatness to his art;
Long seemed unworthy what he sighed to gain,
And shunned it long the surer to obtain.

Deep in his palace, secret and unseen,
Dwelt dark-veiled Policy, mysterious queen;
Unsocial interest and ambition joined
Of yore, to spawn this pelt of humankind.

[1] Sixtus V., when he was cardinal of Montalto, counterfeited the idiot so artfully for fifteen years that he was commonly called the Ass of Ancona. It is well known by what contrivances he obtained the papacy, and with what haughtiness he governed.

Her smiles a free, untroubled soul expressed,
Though cares unnumbered swarmed within her breast;
Keen were her haggard eyes, nor knew to close
Their wakeful lids, nor would admit repose;
Thick woven films o'er Europe's sight she spreads,
Confounds her counsels, and her kings misleads;
Calls truth itself to testify a fraud,
And stamps imposture with the seal of God.
When first the phantom Discord met her view,
With instant rapture to her arms she flew;
Then smiled a ghastly grin, but sighing soon,
As one o'erwhelmed with sorrow, thus begun:
"I see, alas! those happy times no more,
When thoughtless multitudes adored my power,
When Europe credulous obeyed my laws,
And mixed with mine religion's sacred cause.
I spoke, and kings from their exalted seat
Came trembling down, and worshipped at my feet;
High on the echoing Vatican I stood,
And breathed my wars, and launched my storms abroad.
Even life and death confessed my proud domain,
And monarchs reigned by me, or ceased to reign.
Now France subdues my lightnings e'er they fly,[1]

[1] During the wars in the thirteenth century, between the emperors and the popes, Gregory IX. had the hardiness not only to excommunicate the Emperor Frederick II., but even to offer the imperial crown to Robert, the brother of St. Louis. The Parliament of France assembled, answered in the name of the king, that the pope could not lawfully depose a sovereign, nor the brother of a king of France receive from the hand of the pope, a crown over which neither he nor St. Peter had any right. In 1570 the sitting parliament issued a famous arret against the bull *"in caena*

And quenched and smothered, in my grasp they die.
Religion's friend, she thwarts my slighted arms,
And breaks my philtres, and dispels my charms;
Truth's borrowed guise in vain did I display,
She first discerned, and tore the mask away.
But oh! what joy could I delude her now,
At last avenge my sufferings on my foe.
Come then! my lightnings with thy torch restore,
And France shall feel us, and the world once more;
Our bonds again, earth's haughty lords shall wear,
Again"—she spoke, and pierced by yielding air.

Remote from Rome, where vanity and pride
In temples sacred to themselves reside,
Concealed from sight, within her humble cell,
Religion, pensive maid, delights to dwell.
There angels hover round her calm abode,
And waft her raptures to the throne of God.
Meanwhile, the sanction of her injured name
The oppressor's wrong and tyrant's fury claim;
Yet doomed to suffer, no revenge she knows,
But melts in silent blessings on her foes.
Her artless charms their modest lustre shroud
Forever from the vain tumultuous crowd,
Who without faith their impious vows prefer,
And pray to fortune, while they kneel to her.
In Henry she beheld her future son,
And knew the fates had marked him for her own,

domini." The celebrated remonstrances made by the parliament under Louis XI., on the subject of the pragmatic sanction, are well known, as are those likewise which they made to Henry III. against the scandalous bull of Sixtus the Fifth, which called the reigning family a generation of bastards, etc., and the continual fortitude with which they always maintained our liberties against the pretensions of the court of Rome.

With sighs to speed the destined hour she strove,
And viewed and watched him with a seraph's love.
Sudden the fiends[1] their awful foe surprise;
The captive lifts to heaven her streaming eyes;
In vain—for heaven to prove her virtue sure
And steadfast faith, resigns her to their power.
Soon in her snowy veil and holy weeds
The monsters muffle their detested heads,
Then fired with hope, and glorying in their might,
Stretch swift to Paris their impetuous flight.
Deep in the Sorbonne, in august debate,
The sage expounders of heaven's dictates sate.
Their faith unshaken, loyalty unfeigned,
The judges and the examples of the land;
Swayed by no error, by no fear controlled,
Each bore an upright heart, was masculine and bold.
Alas! what human virtue never errs—
Behold the tempter! Policy appears;
Smooth was the melting flattery of her tongue,
And on her artful lips persuasion hung.
The dazzling mitre and the sweeping train,
With ease allure the ambitious and the vain;
With secret bribes the miser's voice she buys,
With decent praise, the learned and the wise;
From each his virtue by some art she stole,
And shook with sounding threats the coward's soul.
Their counsels now with riot they disgrace,
Truth heard the din alarmed, and fled the place.
When thus a sage the general voice expressed,
"Kings are the creatures of the Church confessed;
Chastised or pardoned as her laws decree,

[1] Policy and Discord.

That Church, and guardians of those laws, are we;
Annulled and cancelled are the vows we swore;
Such is our will,[1] and Valois reigns no more."
Scarce was the cursed decree pronounced aloud,
When ruthless Discord copied it in blood,
And signed and sworn the fatal record stood.
Then swift from church to church, with eager speed
The fiend divulges their adventurous deed;
Where'er she came her saintly garb bespoke
Esteem, and sage and holy was her look.
Forth from their gloomy cells, she calls amain
The meagre slaves of voluntary pain;
"Behold in me religion's self," she cries,
"Assert my rights, and let your zeal arise,
'Tis I approach you, 'tis my voice you hear,
For proof, mark well the flaming sword I bear,
Of tempered lightning is that edge divine,
And God's own hand intrusted it to mine.
Emerge, my children! from this silent gloom,
The time for action now and high exploit is come.
Go forth, and teach the lukewarm wavering crowd,
To slay their king if they would serve their God.
Think how the ministry by special grace
Was given of old to Levi's holy race;

[1] On Jan. 17, 1589, the faculty of Theology in Paris awarded that famous decree, by which it was declared that the subject was released from his oath of allegiance, and might lawfully make war upon the king. Lefèvre, the dean, and some of the wisest refused to sign it. Afterward, when the Sorbonne were set at liberty, they revoked this decree, which the tyranny of the League had extorted from some of their society. All the religious orders, who like the Sorbonne, had declared themselves against the royal family, like them retracted. But would they have retracted had the house of Lorraine succeeded?

Jehovah's self pronounced that glory due
To their deserts, when Israel's sons they slew.
Where are, alas! those times of triumph fled,
When by the brothers' arm the victim bled?
Ye priests devout, your spirit was their guide,
'Twas by your hands alone Coligny died;
'Twas then the slaughter raged, go forth, explain
My voice abroad, and let it rage again."
She spoke, and waved the signal; every heart
Throbbed with the poison of the beldam's art.
To Paris next their solemn march she led,
High o'er the midst the bannered cross was spread,[1]
And hymns and holy songs they chanted loud,
As heaven itself their impious cause avowed.
Even on their knees their frenzy they declare,
And mix a pious curse in every prayer:
Bold in the pulpit, timorous in the field,
With uncouth arm the ponderous sword they wield,
Their penitential shirts the zealots hide
Beneath their cankered armor's clumsy pride;
And thus the inglorious band in foul array
Through tides of gazing rabble sped their way,
While high in effigy portrayed they bore
Their God, the God of peace, their crazy troop before.
Mayenne with the pomp of public praise adorned
Their wild attempt, which in his heart he scorned.

[1] When Henry III. and the King of Navarre appeared in arms before Paris, most of the monks put on armor and mounted guard with the citizens. This passage in the poem nevertheless alludes to the procession of the League, in which twelve hundred armed monks were reviewed in Paris, having William Rose, bishop of Senlis, at their head. The fact is mentioned here, though it did not happen till after the death of Henry III.

For well he knew fanatic rage would pass
For sound religion with the common class,
Nor wanted he the princely craft, to court
And soothe the follies of the meaner sort.
The soldier laughed, the sage with frowns surveyed
Their antic pageantry and mad parade,
The many rend the skies with loud applause,
And hail the reverend bulwarks of their cause.
Their daring rashness first to fear gave way,
And frenzy now succeeds to their dismay.
The spirit thus that rules the obedient main,
Can lull the waves to rest, or wake the storm again.
Now Discord from the tribe of Valois's foes,
Twice eight,[1] the rankest of the faction chose,
Slaves of the queen, who yet presumed to guide
The car of state, like monarchs, at her side,
While pride and perfidy, revenge and death,
With streams of slaughter marked the road beneath.
Mayenne blushed to see the paltry minions stand
So near himself, his equals in command,
But fellowship in guilt all rank destroys,[2]
As great the wretch who serves, as who employs.
So when the winds, fierce tyrants of the deep,
The Seine or Rhone with rapid fury sweep,
Black rises from below the stagnant mud,
And stains the silver surface of the flood.

[1] It is not meant that there were but sixteen individuals listed in the faction, as the Abbé Legendre has remarked in his little history of France; but they were called "the Sixteen," from the sixteen quarters of Paris which they governed by their spies and their emissaries.

[2] The Sixteen were long independent of the Duke of Mayenne. One of them, named Normand, said once in the duke's chamber, that they who had made the duke could easily unmake him.

So when the flames some destined town invade,
And on the plain the smoking towers are spread,
The mingling metals in one mass are rolled,
And worthless dross incrusts the purest gold.

Themis alone uninfluenced by their crimes,
Escapes the foul contagion of the times;
With her, nor hope of power nor fear prevail,
But still well-poised she trimmed the steady scale,
No spots the lustre of her shrine impair,
But justice finds a sacred refuge there.

There, foes to vice, and equity their guide,
An awful senate o'er the laws preside,
With patriot candor watchful to secure
The people's privilege and monarch's power;
True to the crown, yet anxious for the State,
Tyrants alike and rebels are their hate;
Firm their allegiance still, though free and brave,
They scorn to sink the subject to the slave,
Rome and the Roman power full well they know,
Know to respect it, and to curb it, too.

Chosen from the League, furious troops beset
The portal, and invade the still retreat;
Bussy,[1] than whom no chief might better claim
That bad pre-eminence, their leader came,
And thus the ruffian, proud of the command
He bore, bespoke the venerable band:

[1] On January 16, 1589, Bussy Leclerc, one of the Sixteen, who from a fencing master had become governor of the Bastille, and chief of the faction, entered the grand chamber of the parliament, followed by fifty guards. He presented to them a request, or rather an order to compel them to renounce the royal family. On their refusal he himself imprisoned in the Bastille all those who opposed his party. There he made them fast upon bread and water, that they might be the readier to ransom themselves, for which reason he was called the Grand Penitentiary of the Parliament.

"Ye, who for pay the law's vile drudgery bear,
And doze, and dream, plebeians as you are,
Of kings committed to your guardian care,
Yet still when public feuds and broils prevail,
Set the mean trappings of your rank to sale,
Timorous in war, in peace a blustering train,
Hear what your lords, the commonwealth, ordain.
Societies were formed ere kings were made,
We claim the rights our ancestors betrayed,
The people whom your arts enslaved before,
Discern the cheat, and will be slaves no more.
Truce with the pomp of titles then, away
With every sound of arbitrary sway,
Draw from the people's rights your power alone,
Friends of the State, nor bondsmen of the throne."
He spoke, and scorn appeared in every eye,
Nor censure else vouchsafed they, or reply.
So when of old within her ruined wall
Rome in dismay received the conquering Gaul,
Undaunted still her awful senate sate,
Calm as in peace, nor trembled at their fate.
"Tyrants," he cried with fury, "though not free
From secret dread, obey or follow me."
Then famed for worth and fearless of his foes,
Their honored chief, illustrious Harlay rose,
And claimed his fetters with so stern a tone,
As for their hands he sought them, not his own.
At once his hoary brethren of the laws,
Ambitious victims in the royal cause,
And proud to share their Harlay's glorious pains,
With outstretched arms received the traitor's chains.
The gathering multitude around them roars,
And crowds attend them to those dreary towers,

Where vengeance, undistinguishing in blood,
Too oft confounds the guilty and the good.
Thus sinks the State beneath their lawless power,
The Sorbonne's fallen, the senate is no more.
But why this throng? that universal yell?
The fatal scaffold, and the torturing wheel?
Say for whose punishment this pomp's designed?
For theirs—the first, the noblest of mankind.[1]
So fare the just in Paris, such reward
For patriots here, and heroes is prepared.
Yet hapless sufferers, no disgrace invades
Your honest fame, nor blush your injured shades,
Your fate was glorious, and whoe'er like you
Dies for his king, shall die with glory, too.
O'erjoyed meanwhile, and revelling in blood,
Amidst her bands triumphant Discord stood,
Self-satisfied, with well-contented air,
She saw the dire effects of civil war,
Saw thousands leagued against their monarch's life,
Yet even themselves divided and at strife,
Dupes of her power, and servants of her hate,
Push the mad war, and urge their country's fate,
Tumult within, and danger all without,
While havoc smote the realm, and marched it round about.

[1] On Friday, Nov. 15, 1591, Barnaby Brisson, a person of great knowledge, who performed the duty of chief president in the absence of Achilles de Harlay: Claude Larcher, counsellor of the Inquests, and Jean Tardif, counsellor of the Châtelet, were hanged in the little Châtelet by order of the Sixteen.

CANTO V.

The Argument.

The besieged are very sharply pressed. Discord persuades Clément to go to Paris and assassinate the king. He is conducted by Fanaticism, whom Discord calls for that purpose from the infernal regions. Sacrifice of the Leaguers to the spirits of darkness. Henry III. is assassinated. Sentiments of Henry IV. upon the occasion. He is acknowledged king of France by the army.

Now marching on, those dread machines appeared,
Which death attended, and the rebels feared.
A hundred mouths poured forth the rapid balls,
And iron tempests rattled on the walls.
Now was employed, and exercised in vain
The zeal of party, and the wiles of Mayenne.
The guards of Paris, and the noisy crowd,
The prating doctors insolent, and loud,
Tried, but in vain, our hero to subdue,
Beneath whose feet victorious laurels grew.
By Rome and Philip were the thunders hurled,
But Rome diffused no terrors through the world.
His native sloth the old Iberian showed
And all his succors were too late bestowed.
Through Gallia's realms the plundering troops enjoyed
The spoils of cities which their arms destroyed.
An easy conquest o'er oppressed allies

Was first and fairest in the traitor's eyes.
The falling League but waited to receive
Whate'er the pride of tyranny could give,
When fate, that governs with supreme command,
Appeared suspended by a zealot's hand.
Forgive, ye citizens, whose peaceful days
Are calm, and brightened by serener rays,
Forgive the bard who paints the horrid crimes
That stained the annals of preceding times.
Yourselves unsullied may the lays approve,
Whose hearts are warm with loyalty and love.
In every age, some venerable seer
For heaven's pure joys has shed the pious tear;
Some rigid anchorets with vows divine
Have heaped their incense on religion's shrine.
Lost to the world, to each idea lost
That friendship loves, or charity can boast,
Their gloomy shades and cloisters ever rude
The beams of fair humanity exclude.
Others in flowing periods have displayed
Religion's truths by learning's powerful aid.
In these ambition has produced desires
Mean and unworthy virtue's sacred fires.
Oft have their schemes extended far and wide,
And all their piety been sunk in pride.
Thus by perverse, untoward abuses still
The highest good becomes the greatest ill.
Those, who the life of Dominic embraced,
In Spain with wreaths of glory have been graced,
From mean employments have with lustre shone,
Like painted insects glittering round the throne.
In France they flourished in the days of yore,
With equal zeal, but far unequal power.

The kindly patronage, from kings derived,
Might still attend them, had not Clément lived.
The soul of Clément, gloomy and austere,
Was formed to virtues rigid, and severe.
Soon as the torrent of rebellion flowed,
The tide he followed and pronounced it good.
Fell Discord rising had profusely shed
Infernal poisons o'er his youthful head.
The long-drawn aisle and venerable shrine
Witness what prayers fatigued the powers divine.
This was their form, before the throne of grace,
Whilst dust and ashes sanctified his face:
"Almighty Being, whose avenging arm
Protects religion, and her sons from harm,
How long shall justice sleep, or tyrants live,
The perjured flourish, and oppression thrive?
Let us, O God, Thy gracious mercies tell,
Thy fiery scourges let the sinner feel.
Dispel death's horrid gloom, assist the brave,
And crush the tyrant, whom Thy fury gave.
Send Thy destroying angel from above,
Descend in flames, and let Thy thunders move.
Descend and quell the sacrilegious host,
Defeat their triumphs, and confound their boast.
Let ruin seize, great sovereign Lord of all,
Kings, chiefs, and armies in one common fall,
As gathering storms the leaves of autumn bear
O'er hills and valleys through the fields of air.
The League shall praise Thy name with holy tongue,
Whilst blood and murder elevate the song."
Discord, attentive, heard his hideous cries,
And swift to Pluto's dreary regions flies.
From those dark realms the worst of tyrants came,

Fanatic Demon is his horrid name.
Religion's son, but rebel in her cause,
He tears her bosom, and disdains her laws.
'Twas he that guided Ammon's frantic race,
Where silver Arnon winds his liquid maze.
When weeping mothers, with mad zeal possessed,
Slew their fond infants clinging to the breast.
Through him rash Jephthah vowed, the fiend imbrued
The father's dagger in the daughter's blood.
By him the impious Chalchas was inspired,
And tender Iphigenia's death required.
Thy forests, France, the cruel power approved;
There smoked the incense which Tentates loved.
Thy shades have seen the human victims bleed,
While hoary druids authorized the deed.
From Rome's proud capitol he gave the word,
When Christians shuddered at the pagan sword.
When Rome submitted to the Son of God,
High o'er the church he waved his iron rod.
Christians, once doomed to feel the flickering flame,
Were deaf to mercy, and unmoved by shame.
On Thames's banks the seeds of faction grew,
Whose bloody arm the feeble monarch slew.
The same fierce genius fans the annual fire
At Lisbon, or Madrid, when Jews expire,
Unwilling to desert the cause of heaven,
Or quit the faith their ancestors have given.
Like some high priest his part the demon played,
In the pure vest of innocence arrayed.
Now, from the wardrobe of eternal night
For other crimes equipped, he sprang to light.
Deceit, forever plausible and fair,

Dressed him like Guise in person, height, and air,
The haughty Guise, whose artifice alone
Enchained the listless monarch on his throne,
Whose power still working, like some fatal star,
Foreboded ruin, and inspired to war.
The dreaded helmet glittered on his head;
The sword, prepared for every murderous deed,
Flamed in his hand—and many a wound could tell
How once at Blois the factious hero fell.
For vengeance calling loud, the crimson tide
Fast flowed in copious streams adown his side.
Clad in this mournful garb, when night had shed
Her peaceful slumbers over Clement's head,
In that still hour, when horrid spectres meet,
He sought the zealot in his calm retreat.
Cabal, and superstition, nurse of sin,
Unbarred the doors, and let the chieftain in.
"Thy prayers," he cried, "the powers of heaven receive,
But more than tears or prayers should Clement give.
The Leaguer's God will other offerings claim;
More fit, more worthy of His holy name.
Far other incense must adorn His shrine;
Offerings more pure, and worship more divine.
Had Judith only wept with plaintive sighs,
A female's grief, and unavailing cries,
Had life been dearer than her country's call,
Judith had seen Bethulia's levelled wall.
These exploits copy, these oblations bring,
Derive thy currents from that sacred spring.
I see thee blush—go, fly at my command,
Let royal blood now consecrate thy hand.

Set wretched Paris from her tyrant free,
Avenging Rome, the universe, and me.
Go, murder Valois, as he murdered Guise,
Nor deem it faulty in religion's eyes.
Who guards the Church, and vindicates her laws,
Is bravely acting in fair virtue's cause.
When heaven commands, then every deed is good,
Attend her accents, and prepare for blood.
Thrice happy, couldst thou join the tyrant's death
To Bourbon's fall, and gain a nobler wreath!
Oh, could thy citizens!—but fate denies
Thy hand the honors of that happy prize.
Yet, should thy fame with rays inferior shine,
Scorn not the gift, but finish heaven's design."
Thus spoke the phantom, and unsheathed the blade,
By hatred once in Stygian waters laid.
To Clement's hand he gave the fatal steel,
Then swiftly fled, and downward sank to hell.
The young recluse, too easily deceived,
Himself the Almighty's delegate believed:
Embraced the gift with reverential love,
And begged assistance from the powers above.
The fiend no superstitious influence spared,
But all his soul for parricide prepared.
How apt is error to mislead mankind!
And reason's piercing eye how often blind!
The raging Clement, happy, and at ease,
Happy as those whom truth and virtue please;
With downcast looks, and virtue's clouded brow,
To heaven addressed the sacrilegious vow.
On as he marched, his penitential veil
Concealed from view the parricidal steel.

The fairest flowers each conscious friend bestowed,
And balmy odors to perfume the road.
These guides, in counsel or in praises, joined
To add new fervor to his zealous mind.
The holy calendar received his name,
Equal to saints in virtue, and in fame,
Now hailed as patron, now adored as God,
And fed with incense by the kneeling crowd.
Transports less warm, less moving raptures fired
The Christian heroes, and their souls inspired,
When pious brethren were consigned to death,
Firm, and intrepid to their latest breath.
They kissed each footstep, thought each torture gain,
And wished to feel the agonizing pain.
Fanatics thus religion's ensigns bear,
Like worthies triumph, and like saints appear.
The same desire the good and impious draws,
Unnumbered martyrs fall in error's cause.
Mayenne's piercing eyes beheld the future blow,
And more was known, than what he seemed to know.
Intending wisely, when the blood was spilt,
To reap the profits, but avoid the guilt.
Sedition's sons were left to guide the whole,
And steel with rage the impious zealot's soul.
To Paris' gates they lead the traitor on;
While the Sixteen with fond impatience run
To arts infernal, and devoutly pray
That heaven her secret counsels would display.
This science once distinguished Catherine's reign,
Though always criminal, and often vain.
The servile people, that forever love
Each courtly vice, and what the great approve,
Fond of whate'er is marvelous or new,

The same impieties with zeal pursue.
When night's still shades concealed the bands impure,
Silence conducts them to a vault obscure.
By the pale torch, which faintly pierced the gloom,
They raise an altar on the mouldering tomb.
There both the royal images appear,
Alike the objects of their rage and fear.
There to Almighty power their vows are paid,
And hellish demons summoned to their aid.
High on the walls, a hundred lances stood,
Mysterious, awful terrors! plunged in blood.
Their priest was one of that unhappy race
Proscribed on earth, and sentenced to disgrace,
Slaves long inured to superstition's lore,
Whose crimes and sorrows spread from shore to shore.
The Leaguers next the sacrifice begin
With horrid cries, and bacchanalian din:
Now bathe their arms within the crimson tide;
Now on the altar strike at Valois's side.
Now with more rage, the terror to complete,
See Henry's image trod beneath their feet.
Death, as they thought, would aid the impious blow,
And send the heroes to the shades below.
The Hebrew tried by blasphemy to move
The depths beneath, and all the powers above;
Invoked the spirits that in ether dwell,
Swift lightnings, thunders, and the flames of hell.
Endor's famed priestess erst such offerings made,
And raised by dire enchantments Samuel's shade;
Thus in Samaria once 'gainst Judah hung
The lying accent on the prophet's tongue;

And thus inflexibly Ateius rose
The high designs of Crassus to oppose.
  The League's mad ruler waited to receive
To charms and spells what answer heaven would give,
Convinced that vows, thus offered, wing their way
To the pure regions of eternal day.
Heaven heard the magic sounds, which only drew
From thence the vengeance to their errors due.
For them were stopped the laws which nature gave,
And plaintive murmurs filled the silent cave.
Successive lightnings in the depth of night
Flashed all around and gleamed with horrid light.
Great Henry shone amidst the lambent flames,
Encircled round with glory's golden beams.
High on the car of triumph as he rode,
Grace on his brow the laurel wreath bestowed,
The royal sceptre glittered in his hand,
Emblem of power, and ensign of command.
Loud rolling thunders gave the fatal sign,
And opening earth received the flaming shrine.
The priest and Leaguers shuddered at the sight,
And veiled their crimes beneath the shades of night.
The rolling thunders and the fiery blaze
Declared that God had numbered Valois's days.
Grim death rejoiced; and, such the Almighty's will,
Crimes were allowed His sentence to fulfil.
  Now Clement to the royal tent drew near,
And begged admission undismayed by fear.
For heaven, he said, had sent him to bestow
Reviving honors on the monarch's brow;
And secrets to unfold, which might appear
Worthy reception from his sovereign's ear.

All mark his looks, and many a question ask
Lest his attire some bad design should mask.
He undisturbed, with calm and simple air
Returns them answers plausible and fair.
Each accent seems from innocence to spring.
The guards attend, and lead him to their king.
Calm as before, he bent the suppliant knee;
Unruffled, and unawed by majesty:
Marked where to strike, and thus, by falsehood's aid,
With treacherous lies his feigned addresses paid:
"Pardon, dread sovereign, him who trembling brings
Submissive praises to the king of kings.
Oh, let me thank kind heaven, whose gracious aid
Has showered down blessings on thy sacred head.
Potier the good, and Villerois the sage
Have faithful proved in this rebellious age.
Harlay the great, whose brave, intrepid zeal
Was ever active in the public weal,
Immured in prison, still thy cause defends,
Confounds the League, and animates thy friends.
"That mighty Being, whose all-piercing eyes
Defeat the counsels of the great and wise:
Whose will no human knowledge can withstand,
Whose works are finished by the weakest hand:
To Harlay guided thy devoted slave,
That loyal subject ever good and brave.
His sage advice and sentiments refined
Diffused a radiance o'er my clouded mind.
To bring these lines with eagerness I flew,
By Harlay counselled, and to Valois true."
The king received the letters with surprise,

And tears of holy rapture filled his eyes.
"Oh, when," he cried, "shall Valois's hand supply
Rewards proportioned to thy loyalty?"
Thus spoke the monarch with affection warm,
Love undissembled, and extended arm.
Each motion well the monstrous traitor eyed,
And fiercely plunged the dagger in his side.
Soon as they saw the crimson torrents flow,
A thousand hands revenged the fatal blow.
The zealot wished not for a happier time,
But stood unmoved, and triumphed in his crime.
Through opening skies, he saw the heavenly dome,
And endless glories in the world to come;
Claimed the bright wreath of martyrdom from God,
And falling, blessed the hand that shed his blood.
Oh, dread illusion, terrible and blind,
Worthy the hate and pity of mankind.
Infectious preachers more deserved the blame,
From whom the madness and the poison came.

The hour arrived when Valois's darkened sight
Faintly beheld the parting, glimmering light.
Surrounding slaves with many a falling tear
Expressed their griefs dissembled or sincere.
For some there were, whose sorrows soon expired,
With pleasing hopes of future greatness fired.
Others, whose safety with the king was fled,
Themselves lamented, not the royal dead.
Amidst the various sounds of plaintive cries
Tears unaffected flowed from Henry's eyes.
Thy foe, great Bourbon, fell; but souls like thine
In such dread moments every thought resign,
Save those which friendship and compassion claim:
Self-love destroys not the celestial flame.

The generous chief forgot his own renown,
Though to himself devolved the regal crown.
To raise his eyes the dying monarch strove,
And clasped his hand with tenderness and love.
"Bourbon," he cried, "thy generous tears refrain,
Let others weep whose conduct I disdain.
Fly thou to vengeance, spread the dire alarm,
Go reign, and triumph with victorious arm.
I leave thee struggling on the stormy coast
Where shipwrecked Valois was forever lost.
My throne awaits thee, take it as thy due,
Its sole protection was derived from you.
Eternal thunders threaten Gallia's kings,
Then fear the power from whom the glory springs.
By thee, from impious tenets undeceived,
Be all the honors of His shrine revived.
Farewell, brave prince, and reign by all adored,
Guarded by heaven from each assassin's sword.
You know the League, with us begins the blow,
Nor stays its fury, but would end with you.
In future days perchance some barbarous hand,
Obedient slave to faction's dread command,
Some arm—but oh! ye guardian angels, spare
Virtues so pure, so exquisite, and rare.
Permit"—no more he said; departing breath
Consigned the monarch to the arms of death.
Now was all Paris filled with joyful cries,
And odious songs of triumph rent the skies.
The fanes are opened wide at Valois's death,
And every Leaguer wears the flowery wreath.
All labor ends while faction blithe and gay,
To mirth and feasting consecrates the day.
Bourbon appeared the object of their sport,

And glorious valor seemed his sole support.
Say, could he rise, and e'er resist again
The strengthened League, the angry Church, and Spain,
The Roman thunders with such fury hurled,
And the bright treasures of the western world?
Some warlike few, who little understood
What most contributes to the public good,
Affecting scruples foolish and refined,
Calvin's defence already had resigned.
Redoubled ardor in the royal cause
The rest inflamed, and ruled by other laws.
These generous soldiers, well approved in war,
Who long had rode on triumph's radiant car,
To Bourbon give unsettled Gallia's throne,
And all proclaim him worthy of the crown.
Those valiant knights, the Givris, and Daumonts,
The Montmorencys, Sancis, and Crillons,
Swear to remain inviolable friends,
And guard his person to earth's utmost ends.
True to their laws, and faithful to their God,
They boldly march where honor points the road.
"From you, my friends," cried Bourbon, "is derived
That lot which kindred heroes have received.
No peers have authorized our high command,
No holy oil, or consecrating hand.
All due allegiance, in the days of yore,
Your brave forefathers on their bucklers swore.
To victory's laurelled field your hands confined
From there send forth the monarchs of mankind."
Thus spoke the chief, and, marching first, prepared
By martial deeds to merit his reward.

CANTO VI.

The Argument.

After the death of Henry III., the Leaguers assemble in Paris to elect a king. In the midst of their debates, Henry IV. storms the city. The assembly is dismissed. The members that composed it repair to the ramparts. Description of the ensuing battle.

In France an ancient custom we retain,
When death's rude stroke has closed the monarch's reign,
When destiny cuts short the smooth descent,
And all the royal pedigree is spent,
The people to their former rights restored,
May change the laws or choose their future lord.
The states in council represent the whole,
Elect the king, and limit his control;
Thus our renowned forefathers did ordain
That Capet should succeed to Charlemagne.
The League with vain presumption arrogates
This right, and hastens to convene the states.
They thought the murder of the king bestowed
That power perhaps, on those who shed his blood,
Thought that the semblance of a throne would shroud
Their dark designs, and captivate the crowd,
Would help their jarring counsels to unite,
And give their foul pretence an air of right;
That from what source soe'er his claim may spring,
Just or unjust, a king is still a king,

And worthy or unworthy of the sway,
A Frenchman must have something to obey.
Swift to the Louvre with imperious air
And fierce demeanor the proud chiefs repair;
Thither whom Spain ambassador had sent,
And Rome, with many a priestly bigot went,
To speed the election with tumultuous haste,
An insult on the kings of ages past,
And in the splendor of their trains, expense
Was seen, the child of public indigence.
No princely potentate or high-born peer
Sprung from our old nobility, was there,
Their grandeur now a shadowy form alone,
Though lawgivers by birth and kinsmen of the throne.
No sage assertors of the public claim,
Strenuous and hardy, from the commons came,
No lilies as of old the court arrayed,
But foreign pomp and pageant in their stead.
There sumptuous o'er the throne for Mayenne prepared,
A canopy of royal state was reared,
And on the front with rich embroidery graced,
Oh, dire indignity! these lines were traced.
"Kings of the earth, and judges of mankind,
Who deaf to mercy, by no laws confined,
Lay nature waste beneath your fierce domain,
Let Valois' fate instruct you how to reign."
Forthwith contentious rage with jarring sound,
And clamorous strife discordant echo round.
Slave to the smiles of Rome, obsequious here
A venal flatterer soothes the legate's ear;
" 'Tis time," he cries, "the lily should bow down

Her head, obedient to the triple crown,
Time that the Church should lift her chastening hand,
And from her high tribunal scourge the land." [1]
Cruel tribunal! scene of monkish power,
Which even the realms that suffer it, abhor;
Whose fiery priests by bigotry prepared,
Torture and death without remorse award,
Disgraceful to the sacred cause they guard;
As if mankind were, as of old, possessed
With pagan blindness, when the lying priest
To appease the wrath of heaven with vengeance fired,
The sacrifice of human blood required.
Some for Iberian gold betray the State,
And sell it to the Spaniard whom they hate.
But mightier than the rest, their power was shown,
Who destined Mayenne already to the throne.
The splendor of a crown was wanting yet,
To make the fulness of his fame complete;
To that bright goal his daring wish he sends,
Nor heeds the danger that on kings attends.
Then Potier rose; plain, nervous and untaught
His eloquence, the language of his thought.
No blemish of the times had touched the sage,
Revered for virtue in a vicious age;
Oft had he checked, with courage uncontrolled,
The tide of faction headlong as it rolled,
Asserted hardily the laws he loved,
Nor ever feared reproof, or was reproved.
He raised his voice; struck silent at the sound

[1] The Dukes of Guise wanted to establish the Inquisition in France.

The crowd was hushed, and listening gathered round.
So when at sea the winds have ceased to roar,
And the loud sailor's cries are heard no more,
No sound survives, but of the dashing prow
That cleaves with prosperous course the obedient wave below.
Such Potier seemed; no rude disturbance broke
The attentive calm, while freely thus he spoke:
"Mayenne, I perceive then, has the general voice:
And though I praise not, can excuse your choice;
His virtues I esteem not less than you,
And were I free to choose, might choose him, too.
But if the laws ambitious he pervert,
His claim of empire cancels his desert."
Thus far the sage; when lo! that instant Mayenne
Himself appeared, with all a monarch's train.
"Prince!" he pursued, and spoke it boldly forth,
"I dare oppose you, for I know your worth;
Dare step between your merit and the throne,
Warm in the cause of France, and in our own.
Vain your election were, your right unsound,
While yet in France a Bourbon may be found;
Heaven in its wisdom placed you near the throne,
That you might guard but not usurp the crown;
His ashes sprinkled with a monarch's gore
The shade of injured Guise can ask no more;
Point not your vengeance then at Henry's head,
Nor charge him with the blood he never shed.
Heaven's influence on you both too largely flows,
And 'tis your rival virtue makes you foes.
But hark! the clamor of the common herd
Ascends the skies, and heretic's the word;

And see the priesthood ranged in dark array,
To deeds of blood insatiate urge their way!
Barbarians, hold—what custom yet unknown,
What law, or rather frenzy of your own,
Can cancel your allegiance to the throne?
Comes he, this Henry, savage and unjust,
To o'erthrow your shrines, and mix them with the dust?
He, to those shrines in search of truth he flies,
And loves the sacred laws yourselves despise;
Virtue alone, whatever form she wears,
Whatever sect she graces he reveres;
Nor like yourselves, weak, arrogant and blind,
Dares do the work of God, and judge mankind;
More righteous and more Christian far than you,
He comes to rule, but to forgive you, too.
And shall you judge your master, and shall he,
The friend of freedom, not himself be free?
Not such, alas! nor sullied with your crimes,
Were the true Christian race of elder times;
They, though all heathen errors they abhorred,
Served without murmuring their heathen lord,
The doom of death without a groan obeyed,
And blessed the cruel hand by which they bled:
Such are the Christians whom true faith assures,
They died to serve their kings, you murder yours,
And God, whom you describe forever prone
To wrath, if He delights to shower it down
On guilty heads, shall aim it at your own."
He closed his bold harangue, confusion scared
Their conscious souls, none answered him, or dared;
In vain they would have shaken from their hearts,
The dread which truth to guiltiness imparts,

With fear and rage their troubled thoughts were tossed,
When suddenly a shout from all their host
Was heard: "To arms! to arms! or we are lost."
Dark clouds of dust in floating volumes rise
Wide o'er the champaign, and obscure the skies;
The clarion and the drum with horrid sound,
Dread harbingers of slaughter echo round.
So from his gloomy chambers in the North,
When the fierce spirit of the storm breaks forth,
His dusky pinions shroud the noon-day light,
And thunder and sharp winds attend his dreary flight.
'Twas Henry's host came shouting from afar,
Disdaining ease, and eager for the war;
O'er the wide plain they stretched their bright array,
And to the ramparts urged their furious way.
These hours the chief vouchsafed not to consume
In empty rites performed at Valois' tomb,
Unprofitable tribute! fondly paid
By the proud living to the unconscious dead;
No lofty dome, nor monumental pile,
On the waste shore he raised with fruitless toil,
Vain arts! to rescue the departed great,
From the rough tooth of time and rage of fate;
A nobler meed on Valois' shade below,
And worthier gifts he hastened to bestow,
To avenge his murder, make rebellion cease,
And rule the subjugated land in peace.
The din of battle gathering at their gates,
Dissolved their council, and dispersed the states.
Swift from the walls to view the advancing host
The general flew, the soldier to his post,

With shouts the approaching hero they incense,
And all is ripe for onset and defence.
Though pleasure now, and peace securely reign
In all her courts, not such was Paris then,
But girt with massy walls, and unexposed,
An hundred forts the narrower town inclosed;
The suburbs now defenceless and unbarred,
The gentle hand of peace their only guard,
Adorned with all the pomp that wealth supplies,
Proud spires and palaces that pierce the skies,
Were then a cluster of rude huts alone,
A rampart all around of earth was thrown,
With a deep foss to part them from the town.
From the east the mighty chief his march began,
And death with hasty strides came foremost in his van.
Winged with red flames impetuous from on high
And from below, the showery bullets fly,
The rattling storm resistless thickens round,
And tumbles tower and bastion to the ground;
Gored and defaced the gay battalions bleed,
And on the plain their shattered limbs are spread.
In earlier times, unaided and untaught,
His fate by simpler means the soldier wrought;
Strength against strength opposed the contest tried,
And on their swords alone the combatants relied;
More cruel wars their children learned to wage,
Nor less than lightning satisfied their rage.
Then first was heard the thunder-bearing bomb,
Imprisoned mischief struggling in its womb,
Swift on the destined mark the ponderous shell
Came down, and spread destruction where it fell.
Next, dire improvement on the barbarous trade,

In hollow vaults the secret mine was laid;
In vain the warrior trusting in his might,
Speeds his bold march, and seeks the promised fight,
A sudden blast divides the yawning earth,
And the black vapor kindles into birth,
Smote by strange thunder sinks the astonished host,
Deep in the dark abyss forever lost.
These dangers Bourbon unappalled defies,
Impatient for the strife, a throne the prize.
Where'er his hardy bands the hero leads,
'Tis hell beneath, and tempest o'er their heads,
His glorious steps, undaunted they pursue,
Fired by his deeds still brightening in their view.
  Grave in the midst the valiant Mornay went,
Though slow his march, intrepid his intent;
Rage he alike disdained and slavish dread,
Nor heard the thunders bursting round his head;
War was heaven's scourge on man, he wisely thought,
Nor loved the task, but took it as his lot;
Even for the wonders of his sword he grieved,
And loathed it for the glories it achieved.
  Now poured their legions down the dreadful way,
Where smeared with blood the sloping glacis lay;
More fierce as more in danger, with the slain
They choke the foss, and lift it to the plain,
Then borne upon the supple numbers, reach
The ramparts, and rush headlong to the breach.
Waving his bloody falchion, Henry led
The way, and entered furious at their head.
Already fixed by his victorious hand
High on the walls his glittering banners stand:
Awe-struck the Leaguers seemed, as they implored

The conqueror's mercy, and confessed their lord;
But Mayenne recalls them to their guilty part,
And drives the dawning grace from every heart,
Till crowded in close phalanx, they beset
Their king, whose eye their hardiest feared to meet.
Fierce on the battlements, and bathed in blood
Of thousands slain, the fury Discord stood;
There best her horrid mandates they obey,
And joined in closer fight more surely slay.
Sudden the deep-mouthed engines cease to roar,
And the loud thunder of the war is o'er:
At once a universal silence round,
With awful pause, succeeds the deafening sound;
Now through his foes the soldier cleaves his way,
And on the sword alone depends the day;
Alternate the contending leaders boast
The bloody ramparts won, and yield them lost:
Still victory the doubtful balance swayed,
And joined in air the mingling banners played,
Till oft triumphant, and as oft subdued,
Fled the pale League, and Henry swift pursued.
'Tis thus the restless billows wash the shore,
By turns o'erwhelm it, and by turns restore.
Then most in that tremendous hour was shown,
The might of Bourbon's rival, and his own;
'Twas then each hero's warlike soul was proved,
That in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
Amidst confusion, horror and despair,
Ranged the dread scene and ruled the doubtful war.
Meanwhile renowned for many a martial deed,
A gallant English band brave Essex led,
In Gallia's cause with wonder they advance,
And scarcely can believe they fight for France.

On the same ramparts where the conquered Seine,
Saw in old time their great forefathers reign,
For England's sake they wage the mortal strife,
Proud to enhance her fame, and prodigal of life.
Impetuous Essex first the breach ascends,
Where fierce d'Aumale the crowded pass defends.
To fight like fabled demi-gods they came,
Their age, their ardor, and their force the same;
French, English, Lorrainese in combat close,
And in one stream the mingled slaughter flows.
Oh thou! the genius of that fatal day,
Soul of the strife, destroying angel, say,
Whose was the triumph then; which hero's host
Yourself assisted, and heaven favored most?
Long time the chiefs with rival glory crowned,
Dealt equal slaughter through the legions round;
At length, by factious rage in vain assailed,
The righteous cause and Henry's arms prevailed;
Worn with disastrous toil and long fatigue,
Exhausted, hopeless, fled the vanquished League.
As on Pyrenees' ever-clouded brow,
When swelling torrents threat the vale below,
A while with solid banks and lofty mounds,
They stay the foaming deluge in its bounds;
But soon, the barrier broke, the rushing tide
Roars unresisted down the mountain's side,
Uproots the forest oaks, and bears away,
Flocks, folds and herds, an undistinguished prey:
So from the smoking walls with matchless force,
Victorious Bourbon urged his rapid course,
Such havoc where the royal warrior passed,
Deformed the ranks and laid the battle waste.
At length the friendly gates, by Mayenne's com-
mand

Flung wide, received the desolated band,
The victor hosts around the suburbs fly
Incensed, and hurl the blazing torch on high,
Their temperate valor kindles into rage,
And spoil and plunder are the war they wage.
Henry perceived it not; with eager flight
He chased the foe, dispersed before his sight;
Spurred by his courage, with success elate
And ardent joy, he reached the hostile gate,
Thence on his scattered force aloud he calls,
"Haste, fly my friends, and scale the haughty walls."
When suddenly in rolling clouds enshrined,
A beauteous form came floating on the wind,
With gracious mien and awful to the view,
Towards Henry the descending vision flew,
His brow was with immortal splendor graced,
And horror mixed with love his radiant eyes expressed.
"Hold, hapless conqueror of your native land!"
The phantom cried, "and stay your vengeful hand;
This fair dominion you with war deface,
Is yours of old, the birthright of your race;
These lives you seek, are vassals of your throne,
This wealth you give to plunder, is your own;
Spare your own heritage, nor seek to reign
A solitary monarch o'er the slain."
Amazed the soldier heard the solemn sound,
And dropped his spoils, and prostrate kissed the ground.
Then Henry, rage still boiling in his breast,
Like seas hoarse murmuring while they sink to rest,
"Say bright inhabitant of heaven, what means

Your hallowed form amidst these horrid scenes?"
Mild as the breeze, at summer's evening tide
Serene, the visionary shape replied:
"Behold the sainted king whom France adores,
Protector of the Bourbon race, and yours,
That Louis, who like you once urged the fight,
Whose shrines you heed not, and whose faith you slight;
Know when the destined days their course have run,
Heaven shall itself conduct you to the throne;
Thine is the victory, but that great reward,
Is for thy mercy, not thy might, prepared."
He spoke, the listening chief with rapture hears,
And down his cheek fast flow the joyful tears;
Peace soothed his tranquil heart, he dropped his sword,
And on his knees devout the shade adored.
Then twice around his neck his arms he flung,
And thrice deceived on vain embraces hung;
Light as an empty dream at break of day,
Or as a blast of wind, he rushed away.
Meanwhile in haste to guard the invested town,
The swarming multitude the ramparts crown,
Thick from above a fiery flood they pour,
And at the monarch aim the fatal shower,
But heaven's bright influence, round his temples shed,
Diverts the storm, and guards his sacred head.
'Twas then he saw, protected as he stood,
What thanks to his paternal saint he owed;
Towards Paris his sad eye in sorrow thrown,
"Ye French!" he cried, "and thou ill-fated town,
Ye citizens, a blind deluded horde,

How long will you withstand your lawful lord!"
Nor more; but as the star that brings the day,
At eve declining in his western way,
More mildly shoots his horizontal fires,
And seems an ampler globe as he retires,
Such from the walls the parting hero turned,
While all his kindred saint within his bosom burned.
Vincennes he sought, where Louis whilom spoke
His righteous laws beneath an aged oak.
Vincennes,[1] alas! no more a calm retreat,
How art thou changed, thou once delightful seat!
Thy rural charms, thy peaceful smiles are fled,
And blank despair possesses thee instead.
'Tis there the great, their hapless labors done,
And all the short-lived race of glory run,
The fickle changes of their various lot
Conclude, and die neglected and forgot.
Now night o'er heaven pursued her dusky way,
And hid in shades the horrors of the day.

[1] It is well known how many illustrious prisoners the Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin confined at Vincennes.

CANTO VII.

The Argument.

Henry IV. is transported in a vision by St. Louis to heaven, and the infernal regions. He arrives at the palace of the Destinies; where he has an opportunity of seeing his posterity, and the great men hereafter to be produced in France.

The great, the boundless clemency of God,
To soothe the ills of life's perplexing road,
Sweet sleep, and hope, two friendly beings gave,
Which earth's dark, gloomy confines never leave.
When man, fatigued by labors of the day,
Has toiled his spirits and his strength away,
That, nature's friend, restores her powers again,
And brings the blest forgetfulness of pain.
This, oft deceitful, but forever kind,
Diffuses warmth and transport through the mind.
From her the few, whom heaven approves, may learn
The pleasing issue of each high concern,
Pure as her author in the realms above
To them she brings the tidings of his love.
Immortal Louis bid the faithful pair
Expand their downy wings, and soften Henry's care.
Still sleep repairs to Vincennes' shady ground;
The winds subside, and silence reigns around.
Hope's blooming offspring, happy dreams succeed,
And give the pleasing, though ideal meed.

The verdant olive, and the laurel bough,
Entwined with poppies, grace the hero's brow.
On Bourbon's temples Louis placed the crown
Whose radiant honors once adorned his own.
"Go, reign," he cried, "and triumph o'er thy foes;
No other hope the race of Louis knows.
Yet think diviner presents to receive,
Far more, my son, than royalty I give.
What boots renown in arms, should heaven withhold
Her light more precious than the purest gold?
These worldly honors are a barren good;
Rewards uncertain on the brave bestowed:
A transient greatness, and a fading wreath
Blasted by troubles, and destroyed by death.
Empire more durable, for thee designed,
I come to show thee, and inform thy mind.
Attend my steps through paths thou ne'er hast trod,
And fly to meet the bosom of thy God."
Thus spoke the saint; they mount the car of light,
And swiftly traverse the ethereal height.
Thus midnight lightnings flash, while thunders roll,
And cleave the ambient air from pole to pole.
Thus rose Elijah on the fiery cloud;
The radiant ether with effulgence glowed:
To purer worlds, arrayed in glories bright,
The prophet fled, and vanished from the sight.
Amidst those orbs which move by certain laws
Known to each sage whom love of science draws,
The sun, revolving round his axis turns,
Shines undiminished, and forever burns.
Thence spring those golden torrents, which bestow
All vital warmth, and vigor as they flow.

From thence the welcome day, and year proceeds;
Through various worlds his genial influence spreads.
The rolling planets beam with borrowed rays,
And all around reflect the solar blaze;
Attract each other, and each other shun:
And end their courses where they first begun.
Far in the void unnumbered worlds arise,
And suns unnumbered light the azure skies.
Far beyond all the God of heaven resides,
Marks every orbit, every motion guides.
Thither the hero and the saint repair;
Myriads of spirits are created there,
Which amply people all the globe, and fill
The human body; such the Almighty's will.
There, with immortal spirits at His feet,
The Judge incorruptible holds His seat.
The God eternal, in all climes adored
By different names, Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.
Before His throne our plaintive sorrows rise;
Our errors He beholds with pitying eyes:
Those senseless portraits, figured by mankind,
To paint His image, and omniscient mind.
All who on earth's inferior confines breathe,
Attend His summons through the gates of death:
The Eastern sage, with holy wisdom fraught,
The sons of science, whom Confucius taught;
Those who succeed in Zoroaster's cause,
And blindly yield submission to his laws:
The pale inhabitants of Zembla's coast,
That dreary region of eternal frost;
America's sons, with fatal error blind,
Where truth illumines not the savage mind.
The gazing Dervish looks in vain around

At God's right hand no prophet to be found.
The Bonze, with gloomy, penitential brow,
Derives no comfort from his rigid vow.
At once enlightened, all the dead await
To hear their sentence, and approaching fate.
That mighty Being, whose extended view,
And boundless knowledge looks all nature through,
The past, the present, and the future times,
Rewards their love, or punishes their crimes.
The prince approached not, in those realms of light,
The throne invisible to human sight;
Whence issues forth the terrible decree
Which man presumes too fondly to foresee.
Is God, said Henry to himself, unjust,
On whom the world's created beings trust?
Will the Almighty not vouchsafe to save
For want of knowledge which He never gave?
Expect religion where it never shone;
And judge the universe by laws unknown?
His hand created all, and all will find
That heaven's high king is merciful, and kind.
His voice informs the whole, and every part;
Fair nature's laws are stamped on every heart.
Nature, the same through each inferior clime,
Pure, and unspotted to the end of time,
By this the pagan's sentence will proceed,
And pagan virtue is religion's deed.
While thus, with reason narrow, and confined,
On truths mysterious he employed his mind,
A solemn, awful voice was heard around;
All heaven, all nature shuddered at the sound.
Such were the thunders, which from Sinai's brow,
Diffused a horror through the plains below,

Each seraph glowed with adoration's fire,
And silence reigned through all the cherub choir.
The rolling spheres the sacred accents caught,
And truths divine to other planets taught.
Distrust thy mental powers, nor blindly stray
As pride, or feebler reason points the way,
The High Invisible who rules above,
Escapes thy knowledge, but demands thy love.
His power, and justice punish, and control
Each wilful error of the stubborn soul.
To pure devotion be thy heart consigned,
Truth's radiant orb illumine all thy mind.
These were the sounds, when, through the fields of light,
A rapid whirlwind from the ethereal height
Conveyed the prince to dark, and dreary climes,
Like those where Chaos reigned in elder times.
No solar influence, like its author mild,
Diffuses comfort through the savage wild.
Angels abhor the desolated waste,
Which life's fair, fruitful blossom never graced.
Confusion, death, each terror of despair,
Fixed on his throne, presides a tyrant there.
O heavens! what shrieks of woe, what piteous cries,
What sulphurous smokes, what horrid flames arise!
"What fiends," cried Bourbon, "to these climes retreat!
What gulfs, what torrents burst beneath our feet!"
"See here," the saint returned, "the gates of hell,
Which justice formed, where impious spirits dwell.
Come, view the dismal regions of distress;
These paths are always easy of access."
There squint-eyed Envy lay, whose poisonous breath

Consumes the verdure of each laurel wreath:
In night's impenetrable darkness bred,
She hates the living, but applauds the dead.
Her sparkling eyes, which shun the orb of day,
Perceiving Henry, Envy turned away.
Near her, self-loving, self-admiring Pride,
And downcast Weakness, ever pale, reside.
Weakness, which yields to each persuasive crime,
And crops the flower of virtue in its prime.
Ambition there with headstrong fury raves,
With thrones surrounded, sepulchres, and slaves.
Submissive, meek Hypocrisy was nigh,
Hell in her heart, all heaven in her eye.
There Interest, father of all crimes, appeared,
And blinded Zeal by cruelty revered.
These wild, tyrannic rulers of mankind,
When Henry came, their savage air resigned.
Their impious troop ne'er reached his purer soul,
Such virtue yields not to their mad control.
"Who comes," they cried, "to break the peaceful rest
Of night eternal, and these shades molest?"
Our hero viewed the subterranean scene,
And slowly travelled through the ranks obscene.
Louis led on.—Oh heaven! is that the hand,
Which murdered Valois at the League's command?
Is that the monster? yes, I know him well,
His arm still holds the parricidal steel.
While barbarous priests proclaim the wretch divine,
And place his portrait on the hallowed shrine,
Though Rome, and faction celebrate his name
To hymns, and praises hell denies his claim.
"Princes, and kings," the honored saint replied,

"Meet in these realms the punishment of pride.
Behold those tyrants, once adored by all,
Whose height but served to aggrandize their fall.
God pours His vengeance on the sceptred crowd,
For vice committed, and for crimes allowed.
Death, from on high commissioned to destroy,
Cut short the transport of each wayward joy.
No pomp of greatness could the victim save;
Their beams of glory set within the grave.
Now is no civil, sly deceiver near,
To whisper error in the sovereign's ear.
Once injured truth the sword of terror draws;
Displays each crime, and indicates her cause.
Behold yon heroes tremble at her nod,
Esteemed as tyrants in the eyes of God.
Now on their heads descend those thunders dire,
Formed by themselves to set the world on fire.
Close by their side, the weakest of mankind,
Each listless, feeble monarch is reclined;
Whose indolence disgraced the subject land,
Mere airy forms, mere nothings in command.
Sinister counsellors on these await,
Once their imperious ministers of state.
Proud, avaricious, of immortal lives,
Who sold what honors Mars, or Themis gives:
Sold what our fathers purchased by their blood,
And all that's precious to the great, and good."

"Tell me," said Henry, "O ye sons of ease,
Must tender spirits dwell in climes like these?
You, who, on flowery couches, pass away
The tranquil moments of life's useless day.
Shall virtue's friends in fiery torments roll?
Whose faults have risen from expanse of soul.

Shall one mistaken, momentary joy
Maturer Wisdom's plenteous fruits destroy?
This," cried the prince, "the lot of human race?
Condemned for endless ages to distress!
If all mankind one common hell devours,
Eternal tortures close our transient hours,
Who was not more in non-existence blest?
Who would not perish at his mother's breast?
Far happier man! had God's creative hand
Formed him less free, in innocence to stand:
Had God, thus awfully severe, bestowed
The sole capacity of doing good."
"Think not," the saint replied, "that sinners feel
Vengeance too heavy, or deserve not hell.
Think not the great Creator of mankind
To these His works is cruel, or unkind.
Lord of all beings, He presides above
With mercy infinite, and boundless love.
Though mortals see the tyrant in their God,
Parental tenderness directs His rod.
Let not these horrid scenes thy soul alarm;
Compassion checks the fury of his arm:
Nor endless punishments inflicts on those
Whose faults from human imperfection rose:
Whose pleasures, followed by remorse, have been
The transient cause of momentary sin."
Such were his accents—to the realms of light
Both are conveyed with instantaneous flight.
Infernal darkness shuns those flowery plains
Where spotless innocence forever reigns.
There in the floods of purest ether play
The beams refulgent of eternal day.
Each blooming scene seraphic joys bestowed;

And Henry's soul with unknown raptures glowed.
There tranquil pleasure spreads her every charm
Which thought can fancy, or which heaven can form.
No cares solicit, and no passions move;
But all is governed by angelic love.
Far other love, than that of wild desires,
Which grosser sense, and luxury inspires.
The bright, the sacred flame on earth unknown,
Which burns in heaven, and heavenly minds alone.
Its chaste endearments all their hours employ,
And endless wishes meet with endless joy.
There dwell true heroes; there each pious sage,
And monarchs once the glory of their age.
Thence Charlemagne, and Clovis turn their eyes
On Gallia's empire from the azure skies:
On golden thrones forever placed sublime,
And clad in honors unimpaired by time.
There, fiercest foes the happy union prove
Of pure affection, and a brother's love.
Louis the Wise, amidst the royal band,
Tall as a cedar issues his command.
Louis, of France the glory, and the pride,
Who ruled our realms with justice by his side.
Oft would he pardon, oft relief supply;
And wipe the falling tear from every eye.
D'Amboise is still commissioned to attend;
His faithful minister, and warmest friend.
To him alone was Gallia's honor dear:
To him alone her homage was sincere.
His gentler hands were sullied not with blood;
His every wish was centred in her good.
Oh spotless manners! bright, and halcyon days!
Worthy eternal memory, and praise.

Then wholesome laws adorned, and blessed the
State:
Subjects were happy, and the monarch great.
Return, ye halcyon days, with golden wing:
And equal blessings, equal honors bring.
Virtue, descend, another Louis frame
As rich in merit, and as great in fame.
Farther remote, those worthy heroes stood,
Careless of life, and prodigal of blood,
Who died with transport for the public weal;
Led on by duty, not enraged by zeal.
Brave Montmorency[1], Trimouille[2], de Foix[3],
Who sought their passage to those fields of joy.
There Guesclin[4] drinks of pleasure's purer springs:
Guesclin, the avenger, and the dread of kings.
There too appeared the Amazonian dame,[5]
The tottering throne's support, and England's
shame.

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[1] It would fill a volume should we specify the services done to the State by this family.

[2] Among many great men of this name, Guy de la Trimouille is particularly alluded to. He was surnamed "the Valiant"; carried the royal standard: and refused the high constable's sword in the reign of Charles VI.

[3] Gaston de Foix, Duke of Nemours, and nephew of Louis XII. He was slain at the famous battle of Ravenna, having received fourteen wounds and defeated the enemy.

[4] France owed her preservation to this great man, in the reign of Charles V. He conquered Castile, placed Henry de Transtamare upon the throne of Peter the Cruel, and was constable of France, and Castile.

[5] Joan d'Arc, known by the name of the Maid of Orleans. She was servant-maid at an inn; and born at the village of Domremy on the Meuse: being superior to her sex in strength of body and of mind, she was employed by the Count de Dunois to retrieve the affairs of Charles VII., taken prisoner in a sally at Compiègne in 1430, conducted to Rouen, tried as a sorceress in an ecclesiastical court, and burned by the English.

"These," cried the saint, "who now possess the skies,
Like thee with glory dazzled Europe's eyes.
Virtue alone their simpler minds could move:
The Church was nourished by their filial love.
Like me they honored truth's diviner name:
Our worship uniform, our Church the same.
Say, why does Bourbon follow other laws,
Or why defend religion's weaker cause?
"Time, with incessant flight prepared to roam,
Quits, and revisits this terrific dome:
And pours with plenteous hand on all mankind
The good, and evil for each race designed.
An altar high of massy iron bears
The fatal annals of succeeding years.
Where God's own hand has marked, nor marked in vain
Each transient pleasure, each severer pain.
There liberty, that haughty slave, is bound,
With chains invisible encircled round.
Beneath the yoke she bends her stubborn head,
Still unconstrained, unconscious of the deed.
This suppliant turn that hidden chain supplies
Wisely concealed forever from her eyes.
The fates appear her sentence to fulfil:
Each action seems the product of free-will."
"From thence," cried Louis, "on the human race
Descends the influence of heavenly grace.
In future times its power thy tongue shall tell:
Its purer radiance all thy heart shall feel.
Those precious moments God alone bestows;
No mortal hastens, and no being knows.
But Oh how slowly comes that period on

When God shall love, and own thee for His son!
Too long shall weakness hide thy brighter rays;
And lead thy steps through errors slippery ways.
Teach him, kind heaven, the happier, better road;
Shorten the days which part him from his God."
But see what crowds in long succession press
Through the vast region of unbounded space.
These sacred mansions to thy view display
The unborn offspring of some future day.
All times, and places are forever nigh,
All beings present to Jehovah's eye.
Here fate has marked their destined hour of birth,
Their rise, their grandeur, and their fall on earth.
The various changes of each life to come,
Their vices, virtues, and their final doom.
Draw near, for heaven allows us to foresee
What kings, and heroes shall descend from thee.
That graceful personage is Bourbon's son,
Formed to support the glory of the crown.
The warlike leader shall his triumphs boast
O'er Belgia's plains, and proud Iberia's coast.
To deeds more noble shall his son aspire;
And wreaths more splendid first adorn his sire.
On beds of lilies, near a towering throne,
Two radiant forms before our hero shone.
Monarchs they seemed, of high, imperious pride,
And Roman purple flowed adown their side.
A subject nation couched beneath their feet,
And guards unnumbered formed the train complete.
"These," said the saint, "are doomed to endless fame:
In all things sovereign, save the royal name.
Richelieu, and Mazarin, designed by fate

Immortal ministers of Gallia's State.
To them shall policy consign her aid;
And fortune raise them from the altar's shade.
Ruled by despotic power, shall France confess
Great Richelieu's genius, Mazarin's address.
One flies[1] with art before the rising storm:
One braves all danger in its fiercest form.
Both to the princes of our royal blood
With hate relentless enemies avowed.
With high ambition, and with pride inspired,
By all disliked and yet by all admired.
Their artful schemes, and industry shall bring
Plagues on their country, glory on their king.
"O thou, great Colbert,[2] whose enlightened mind
Schemes less extensive for our good designed!
No lustre equals, none excels thy own,
Save that which gilds, and decorates the crown.
Nursed by thy genius, heaven-born plenty reigns,
And pours her treasures over Gallia's plains.
Colbert by generous deeds to glory rose:
His only vengeance was to bless his foes.
Thus were dispensed the gifts of heavenly grace,
By God's own confidant on Israel's race.
That race, whose blasphemy could ne'er remove,
Or quench the beams of mercy, and of love.

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[1] Cardinal Mazarin was obliged to leave the kingdom in 1651; notwithstanding that he had the entire government of the queen regent. Cardinal Richelieu, on the contrary, always maintained his situation in spite of his enemies, and of the king, who was disgusted at his behavior.

[2] Colbert was detested by the people. That blind and savage monster would have dug his body out of the ground; but the approbation of men of sense, which at length prevailed, has rendered his name forever dear, and respectable.

"What troops of slaves before that monarch[1] stand!
What numbers tremble at his high command!
No king did Gallia ever yet obey
With such profound submission to his sway.
Though less beloved, more dreaded in her eyes,
Like thee he claims fair glory's richest prize.
Firm in all danger, in success too warm
When fortune smiles, and conquest meets his arm.
Himself shall crush, superior to intrigue,
Full twenty nations joined in powerful league.
Praise shall attend him to his latest breath,
Great in his life, but greater in his death.
Thrice happy age! when nature's lavish hand
With all her graces shall adorn the land.
Thrice happy age! when every art refined
Spreads her fair polish o'er the ruder mind.
The muse forever our retreats shall love
More than the shades of Aganippe's grove.
From sculptured stone the seeming accent flows;
With animated tints the canvas glows.
What sons of science in that period rise,
Measure the universe, and read the skies!
The purer ray of philosophic light
Reveals all nature, and dispels the night.
Presumptuous error from their view retreats;
Truth crowns their labors, and their joy completes.
Thy accents too, sweet music, strike mine ear,
Music, descended from the heavenly sphere.
'Tis thine to soothe, to soften, and control
Each wayward passion of the ruffled soul.
Unpolished Greece, and Italy have owned

[1] Louis XIV.

The strong enchantments of thy magic sound.
The subjects ruled by Gallia's powerful king
Shall bravely conquer, and as sweetly sing.
Shall join the poet's to the warrior's praise,
And twine Bellona's with Apollo's bays.
E'en now I see this second age of gold
Produce a people of heroic mould.
Here numerous armies skim before my sight;
There fly the Bourbons eager for the fight.
At once his master's terror, and support,
Great Condé[1] makes the flames of war his sport.
Turenne more calmly meets the hostile power,
In arms his equal, and in wisdom more.
Assemblage rare! in Catinat[2] are seen
The hero's talents, and the sage's mien.
Known by his compass Vauban[3] from the tower

[1] Louis de Bourbon, generally called the Great Condé; and Henry, Viscount de Turenne, have been looked upon as the greatest generals of their time. They have both gained very important victories, and acquired glory even in their defeats. The Prince of Condé's genius seemed, as it was said, more proper for a day of battle, and that of Turenne for a whole campaign. It is certain at least, that Turenne gained considerable advantages over the Great Condé at Gien, Etampes, Paris, Arras, and the battle of Dunes. We shall not, however, attempt to determine which was the greater man.

[2] The Marshal de Catinat was born in 1637; he gained the battles of Staffarde and Marseilles: and obeyed, without reluctance, or murmuring, the Marshal de Villeroi, who, sent him orders without consulting him. He resigned his command with the utmost composure; never complained of any person's treatment, asked nothing of the king, and died like a true philosopher at his country-seat at St. Gratien. He never augmented or diminished his estate, and never for a moment acted unworthy of his character as a man of temperance and moderation.

[3] The Marshal de Vauban, born in 1633, the greatest engineer that ever lived. He repaired upon a new plan of his own no less than three hundred old fortifications, and

Smiles at the tumult, and the cannon's roar.
England shall tell of Luxembourg's[1] renown,
In war invincible, at court unknown.
Onward I see the martial Villars[2] move
To wrest the thunder from the bird of Jove.
Conquest attends to bid the battle cease,
And leaves him sovereign arbiter of peace.

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built thirty-three. He conducted fifty-three sieges, and was present at one hundred and forty actions. He left behind him at his death twelve manuscript volumes full of designs for the good of the State: none of which has ever yet been executed. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences, and did more honor to it than any other person, by rendering mathematics subservient to the advantage of his country.

[1] Francis Henry de Montmorency, who took the name of Luxembourg; Marshal of France, and both duke and peer of the realm. He gained the battle of Cassel, under the direction of Monsieur, the brother of Louis XIV., and won the celebrated victories of Mons, Fleurus, Steinkirk and Neerwindin, where he acted as commanding officer. He was confined in the Bastille, and exceedingly ill treated by the ministry.

[2] It was the author's original design to mention no living character through the whole poem: and the rule proposed has only been deviated from in favor of the Marshal Duke de Villars. He gained the battle of Friedlingen, and that of the first Höchstädt. It is remarkable that in this engagement he posted himself on the same spot of ground which the Duke of Marlborough afterward occupied, when he won that very signal victory of the second Höchstädt, so fatal to France. Upon resuming the command of the army, the marshal was afterward engaged in the famous battle of Blangis, or Malplaquet, in which twenty thousand of the enemy were slain; and the loss of which was owing to the marshal's being wounded. In 1712, when the enemy threatened to proceed to Paris, and it was deliberated whether Louis XIV. should not quit Versailles, the Marshal de Villars defeated Prince Eugene at Denain, dislodged the enemy from their post at Marchienne, raised the siege of Landrecy, took Douay, Quesnoy, and Bouchain at discretion, and afterward agreed upon a peace at Rastadt in the king's name, with the same Prince Eugene, the emperor's plenipotentiary.

Denain shall own brave Villars to have been
The worthy rival of the great Eugene.
"What princely youth[1] draws near, whose manly face
United majesty, and sweetness grace?
See how unmoved—Oh heavens! what sudden shade
Conceals the beauties which his form displayed!
Death flutters round; health, beauty, all are gone:
He falls when ready to ascend the throne.
Heaven formed him all that's truly just, and good:
Descended, Bourbon, from thy royal blood.
Oh gracious God! shall fate but show mankind
A flower so sweet, and virtues so refined!
What could a soul so generous not obtain!
What joys would France experience from his reign!
Produced, and nurtured by his fostering hand
Fair peace, and plenty had enriched the land.
Each day some new beneficence had brought:
Oh how shall Gallia weep! alarming thought!
When one dark, silent sepulchre contains
The son's, the mother's, and the sire's remains.
"Fallen is the tree, and from its ruins springs
An infant successor to Gallia's kings.
A tender shoot, from whose increasing shade
France may derive some salutary aid.
Conduct him, Fleury, to the throne of truth.
Wait on his years, and cultivate his youth.
Teach him self-knowledge, and, if Fleury can,
Teach him that Louis is no more than man.
Inspire each virtue which can life adorn;
Kings for their subjects, not themselves are born.

[1] This poem was composed in the infancy of Louis XV.

And thou, O France, once more arise to day;
Resume thy majesty beneath his sway.
Let every science, which retired before,
Crown thy fair temples, and adorn thy shore.
The azure waters with thy navies sweep:
So wills the monarch of the briny deep.
See, from the Nile, the Euxine, and the Ind,
Each port by nature, or by art designed,
Commerce aloud demands thee for her seat;
And spreads her richest treasures at thy feet.
Adieu to terror, and adieu to war,
The peaceful olive be thy future care.
"Pursued by envy, and distraction's crew,
A chief renowned[1] advances to the view;
Easy, not weak, when glory spurs him on,
Engaged by novelties, by trifles won.
Though luxury displays a thousand charms,
And smiling pleasure courts him to her arms,
Yet shall he keep all Europe in suspense
By artful politics, and manly sense.
The world shall move as Orleans shall guide;
And every science flourish at his side.
Empire, my son, himself shall never reach;
'Tis his the art of government to teach.
"Now burst the lightning from the opening skies,
And Gallia's standard waved before their eyes.
Iberia's troops, arrayed in arms complete,
The German eagle crushed beneath their feet.
When thus the saint—no more remains the trace
Of Charles the Fifth, his glory, or his race.
Each earthly being has its final hour;

[1] A true portrait of the Duke of Orleans.

Eternal wisdom let us all adore.
From here all human revolutions spring:
E'en Spain from Bourbon shall request a king.
Illustrious Philip shall receive the crown;
And sit as monarch on Iberia's throne.
Surprise was soon succeeded by delight,
And Henry's soul enraptured at the sight.
Repress thy transports, cried the saint, and dread
This great event, this present to Madrid.
Say, who can fathom heaven's concealed intent,
Dangers may come, and Paris may repent.
Oh Philip! Oh my sons! shall France and Spain
Thus meet, and never be disjoined again!
How long shall fatal politics forbear
To light the flames of discord, and of war!"
Thus Louis spoke—when lo! the scene withdrew,
Each object vanished from our hero's view.
The sacred portals closed before his eyes,
And sudden darkness overspread the skies.
Far in the east Aurora moving on
Unlocked the golden chambers of the sun.
Night's sable robe o'er other climes was spread,
Each dream retired, and every flitting shade.
The prince arose, with heavenly ardor fired,
Unusual vigor all his soul inspired.
Fear, and respect, great Bourbon, now were thine:
Full on thy brow sat majesty divine.
Thus when before the tribes great Moses stood,
Returned at length from Sinai, and from God,
His eyeballs flashed intolerable light;
Each prostrate Hebrew shuddered at the sight.

CANTO VIII.

The Argument.

The Earl of Egmont comes to assist Mayenne and the League. Battle of Ivry, in which Mayenne is defeated and Egmont slain. Valor, and clemency of Henry the Great.

Dejected by their loss, the states appear
Less haughty, and assume an humbler air,
Henry, such terror in their hearts had wrought,
Their king-creating schemes were all forgot;
Wavering and weak in counsel, and afraid
To crown their idol Mayenne, or to degrade,
By vain decrees they labor to complete
And ratify a power, not given him yet.
This self-commissioned chief,[1] this king uncrowned
In chains of iron rule his faction bound;
His willing slaves obedient to his laws,
Resolve to fight and perish in his cause;
Thus flushed with hope, to council he convenes
The haughty lords, on whom his fortune leans.
They come: despair, and unextinguished hate,
And malice on their faded features sate;
Some tremble in their pace, and feebly tread,
Faint with the loss of blood in battle shed,
But keen resentment prompts them to repair

[1] He was declared by the parliament, which continued attached to him, lieutenant-general of the state and kingdom of France.

Their losses, and revenge the wounds they bear.
Before the chief their sullen ranks they range,
And grasp their shining arms, and vow revenge.
So the firece sons of earth, as fable feigns,
Where Pelion overlooks Thessalia's plains,
With mountains piled on mountains, vainly strove,
To scale the everlasting throne of Jove.
When sudden on a car of radiant light
Exalted, Discord flashed upon their sight;
"Courage," she said, "'tis now the times demand
Your fixed resolves, lo! succor is at hand."
First ran d'Aumale, and joyful from afar
Beheld the Spanish lances gleam in air;
Then cried aloud, "'Tis come; the expected aid,
So oft demanded, and so long delayed."
Near to that hallowed spot, where rest revered
The relics of our kings, their march appeared;
The groves of polished spears, the targets bound
With circling gold, the shining helms around,
Against the sun with full reflection play,
Rival his light and shed a second day.
To meet their march the roaring rabble went,
And hailed the mighty chief Madrid had sent;
That chief was Egmont;[1] famed for martial fire,
Ambitious son of an unhappy sire;
At Brussels first he drew the vital air;
His country's weal was all his father's care,
For that, the rage of tyrants he defied,
And in the cause of freedom, bravely died.
The servile son, as base as he was proud,
Fawned on that hand which shed his father's blood,

[1] The Earl of Egmont, son of Admiral Egmont, who was beheaded at Brussels, together with the Count de Horn.

For sordid interest joined his country's foes,
And fought for France, regardless of her woes.
Philip, on Mayenne the warlike youth bestowed,
And armed him forth to be his guardian god;
Nor doubted Mayenne, but slaughter and dismay
Should spread to Bourbon's tent, when Egmont led
the way.
With heedless arrogance their march they drew,
And Henry's heart exulted at the view,
Gods! how his eager hopes anticipate
And meet the moment that decides his fate.
Their streams where Iton and fair Eura lead,
By nature blest, a fertile plain is spread,
No wars had yet approached the peaceful scene,
Nor warrior's footstep pressed the flowery green,
The shepherds there, while civil rage destroyed
The regions round, their happy hours enjoyed,
Screened by their poverty, they seemed secure
From lawless rapine and the soldier's power,
Nor heard beneath their humble roofs the jar
Of arms, or clamor of the sounding war.
Thither each hostile leader his array
Directs, and desolation marks their way,
A sudden horror strikes the trembling floods,
The frighted shepherds seek the sheltering woods,
The partners of their grief attend their flight,
And bear their weeping infants from the sight.
Ye hapless natives of this sweet recess!
Charge not at least your king with your distress,
For peace he courts the combat, and his hand
Shall shed the bounteous blessing o'er the land;
He shares your sorrows, and shall end your woes,
Nor seeks you, but to save you from your foes.

Along the ranks he darts his glancing eyes,
Swift as the winds his foaming courser flies,
Proud of his load, he catches with delight
The trumpets' sound, and hopes the promised fight.
Crowned with his laurels, at their master's side,
A well-distinguished group of warriors ride,
D'Aumont,[1] beneath five kings a chief renowned,
Biron,[2] whose name bore terror in the sound,
His son,[3] whom toil nor danger could restrain,
Who soon alas!—but he was faithful then;
Grillon and Sully by the guilty feared,
Chiefs whom the League detested, yet revered,
Turenne,[4] whose virtues and unrivalled fame,
Won the fair honors of the Bouillon name,
Ill-fated power alas! and ill-maintained,
Crushed in the birth, and lost as soon as gained.
His crest amid the band brave Essex rears,
And like a palm beneath our skies appears,
Among our elms the lofty stranger shoves
His growth, as if he scorned the native groves.
From his bright casque with Orient gems arrayed

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[1] John d'Aumont, Marshal of France, who did wonders at the battle of Ivry, was the son of Peter d'Aumont and Frances de Sully, an heiress of the ancient family of Sully. He served under Henry II., Francis II., Charles II., Henry III., and Henry IV.

[2] Henry de Gontaut de Biron, Marshal of France, and grand master of the artillery. He was a great warrior, commanded the corps de reserve at Ivry, and was very instrumental in gaining the victory.

[3] Charles Gontaut de Biron, son of the former. He conspired afterward against Henry IV. and was beheaded in the court of the Bastille in 1602.

[4] Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne, Viscount of Turenne, Marshal of France. Henry the Great married him to Charlotte de la Mark, princess of Sedan, in 1591. The marshal went on the wedding night to take Stenay by assault.

And burnished gold, a starry lustre played;
Dear, valued gifts! with which his mistress strove
Less to reward his courage, than his love.
Ambitious chief! the mighty bulwark grown
Of Gallia's prince, and darling of his own.
Such was the monarch's train, with steadfast air
And firm, they wait the signal of the war,
Glad omens from their Henry's eyes they took,
And read their conquest sure in his inspiring look.
'Twas then, afflicted with inglorious dread,
Unhappy Mayenne perceived his courage fled,
Whether at length his boding heart divines
The wrath of heaven on his unjust designs,
Whether the soul prophetic of our doom,
Foresees the dreary train of ills to come,
Whate'er the cause, he feels a chilling fear,
But veils it with a show of seeming cheer,
Inspires his troops with ardor of renown,
And fills their hearts with hopes that dwell not in his own.
But Egmont at his side, with glory fired,
And the rash confidence his youth inspired,
Flushed for the fight, and eager to display
His prowess, chides his infamous delay.
As when the Thracian courser from afar,
Hears the shrill trumpet and the sound of war,
A martial fire informs his vivid eye,
He neighs, he snorts, he bears his head on high,
Impatient of restraint he scorns the rein,
Springs o'er the fence and scours along the plain;
Such Egmont seemed, with beating heart he stood,
And in his eye the rage of battle glowed.
Even now he ponders his approaching fame,

And looks on conquest as his rightful claim;
Alas! he dreams not that his pride shall gain
Naught but a grave, in Ivry's fatal plain.
Bourbon at length drew near, and thus inspired
His ardent warriors whom his presence fired:
"Ye sons of France! your king is at your head,
You see your foes, then follow where I lead,
Mark well this waving plume amid the fight,
Nor let the tempest shade it from your sight,
To that alone direct your constant aim,
Still sure to find it in the road to fame."
Thus spoke the chief; his bands exulting hear,
And with new fury court the glorious war;
Then marched, and as he went, his pious breast
With silent prayers the God of hosts addressed.
At once the legions rush with headlong pace
Behind their chiefs, and snatch the middle space.
So where the seas with narrow Frith divide
Cantabria's coasts from Afric's desert side,
If eastern storms along the channel pour,
Sudden the fierce conflicting oceans roar,
Earth trembles at the shock, the sheeted brine
Invades the skies, the sun forgets to shine,
The trembling Moor believes all nature hurled
In ruin, and expects the falling world.
Now lengthened with the spear the musket spread
The carnage wide, and flew with double speed,
That fatal engine in Bayonne designed,
And framed by Discord to lay waste mankind,
Strikes a twin death, and can at once afford
The worst effect of fire, and havoc of the sword.
Trembled the steadfast earth beneath their feet
As sword to sword and lance to lance they meet,

From rank to rank despair and horror strode,
The shame of flight and impious thirst of blood.
Here from his stronger son the father flies,
There by the brother's arm the brother dies,
Nature was shocked, and Eura's conscious bank
Shrank with abhorrence from the blood it drank.
Bourbon his path right on to glory clears
Through bristling forests of extended spears,
O'er many a crested helm his course he sped;
Close in his rear, serene and undismayed
Went Mornay, thoughtful and intent alone
On Henry's life, regardless of his own.
So, veiled in human shape, the poets feign
The gods engaged in arms on Phrygia's plain;
"So when an angel by divine command,
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Well pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
He rides the whirlwind, and directs the storm."
The royal chief his dread commands expressed,
The prudent dictates of a hero's breast,
Mornay the mighty charge attentive caught,
And bore it where the distant leaders fought,
The distant leaders to their troops convey
The word, their troops receive it, and obey.
They part, they join, in various forms are seen,
One soul informs and guides the vast machine.
Swift through the field returned in haste he seeks
The prince, accosts, and guards him while he speaks.
But still the stoic warrior kept unstained
With human blood, his inoffensive hand,
The king alone employed his generous thought,
For his defence the embattled field he fought,
Detested war, and singularly brave

Knew boldly to face death, but never gave.
Turenne already with resistless power,
Repulsed the shattered forces of Nemours;
Scarce d'Ailly filled the plain, with dire alarms,
Proud of his thirty years consumed in arms;
Still spite of age the veteran chief displays
The well-strung vigor of his youthful days;
Of all his foes, one only would presume
To match his might, a hero in the bloom;
Now first indignant to the field he came,
And parted eager for the goal of fame.
New to the taste of Hymen, yet he fled
The chaste endearments of his bridal bed,
Disdained the trivial praise by beauty won,
And panted for a soldier's fame alone.
That cruel morn, accusing heaven in vain,
And the cursed League that called him to the plain,
His beauteous bride with trembling fingers laced
His heavy corslet on her hero's breast,
And covered with his helm of polished gold
Those eyes which still she languished to behold.
Towards d'Ailly the fierce youth, despising fear,
Spurred his proud steed, and couched his quivering spear,
Their headlong coursers trampled, as they fled,
The wounded heaps, the dying and the dead;
Poachy with blood the turf and matted grass,
Sink fetlock deep beneath them as they pass.
Swift to the shock they come; their shields sustain
The blow, their spears well pointed but in vain,
In scattered splinters shine upon the plain.
So when two clouds with thunder fraught draw near,

And join their dark encounter in mid air,
Struck from their sides the lightning quivers round,
Heaven roars, and mortals tremble at the sound.
Now from their steeds with unabated rage
Alighting swift, a closer war they wage;
Ran Discord to the scene, and near her stood
Death's horrid spectre, pale and smeared with blood.
Already shine their falchions in their hands,
No kind preventing power their rage withstands,
The doom is past, their destiny commands.
Full at each other's heart they aim alike,
Nor knows their fury at whose heart they strike;
Their bucklers clash, thick strokes descend from high,
And flakes of fire from their hard helmets fly,
Blood stains their hands, but still the tempered plate
Retards a while and disappoints their fate.
Each wondering at the long unfinished fight,
Esteems his rival and admires his might;
'Till d'Ailly with a vigorous effort found
The fatal pass, and stretched him on the ground.
His faded eyes forever closed remain,
And his loose helmet rolls along the plain;
Then saw the wretched chief, too surely known,
The kindred features, and embraced his son.
But soon with horror and remorse oppressed,
Reversed the guilty steel against his breast.
That just revenge his hastening friends oppose;
When furious from the dreadful scene he rose;
Forth to the woods his cheerless journey sped,
From arms forever and from glory fled,
And in the covert of a shaggy den,
Dwells a sad exile from the ways of men.

There when the dawning day salutes the skies,
And when at eve the chilling vapors rise,
His unexhausted grief still flows the same,
Still echo sighs around his son's lamented name.
Tender alarms, and boding terrors brought
The bride inquiring to the fatal spot,
Uncertain of her doom, with anxious haste
And faltering knees between the dead she passed,
Till stretched upon the plain her lord she spied,
Then shrieked, and sank expiring at his side.
The damps of death upon her temples hung,
And feeble sounds faint issued from her tongue,
Once more her eyes a last farewell assayed,
Once more her lips upon his lips she laid,
Within her arms the lifeless body pressed,
Then looked, then sighed, then died upon his breast.
Deplored examples of rebellious strife,
Ill-fated victims, father, son, and wife,
Oh may the sad remembrance of your woe,
Teach tears from ages yet unborn to flow,
With wholesome sorrow touch all future times,
And save the children from their father's crimes.
But say what chief disperses thus abroad
The flying League, what hero, or what god?
'Tis Biron, 'tis his youthful arm o'erthrows
And drives along the plain his scattered foes.
D'Aumale beheld, and maddening at the sight,
"Stand fast," he cried, "and stay your coward flight;
Friends of the Guise and Mayenne, their vengeance due
Rome and the Church and France expect from you;
Return then, and your pristine force recall,
Conquest is theirs who fight beneath d'Aumale."

Fosseuse assisting and Beauveau sustain
Their part, and rally the disordered train,
Before the van d'Aumale his station took,
And the closed lines caught courage from his look.
The chance of war now flows a backward course,
Biron in vain withstands the driving force,
Nesle and Angenne within his sight are slain,
And Parabère and Clermont press the plain,
Himself scarce lived, so fast the purple tide
Flowed from his wounds, and happier, had he died.
A death so glorious with unfading fame
Forever had adorned the hero's name.
Soon learned the royal chief to what distress
The youth was fallen, courageous in excess;
He loved him, not as monarchs condescend
To love, but well, and plainly as a friend,
Nor thought a subject's blood so mean a thing,
A smile alone o'erpaid it from a king.
Hail heaven-born friendship! the delight alone
Of noble minds, and banished from the throne.
Eager he flies, the generous fires that feed
His heart augment his vigor and his speed.
He came, and Biron kindling at the view,
His gathered strength to one last effort drew,
Cheered by the well-known voice again he plies
The sword, all force before the monarch flies,
The king redeems thee from the unequal strife
Rash youth, be faithful and deserve thy life.
Hark! a loud peal comes thundering from afar,
'Tis Discord blows afresh the flames of war,
To thwart the monarch's virtue, with new fires
His fainting foes the beldam fiend inspires;
She winds her fatal trump, the woods around

And mountains tremble at the infernal sound.
Swift to d'Aumale the baleful notes impart
Their power, he feels the summons at his heart;
Bourbon alone he seeks: the boisterous throng
Close at his heels tumultuous pour along.
So the well-scented pack, long trained to blood,
Deep in the covert of a spacious wood,
Bay the fierce boar to battle, and elate
With heedless wrath rush headlong on their fate,
The shrillness of the cheering horn provokes
Their rage, and echoes from the distant rocks.
Thus stood the monarch by the crowd enclosed,
A host against his single arm opposed,
No friend at hand, no welcome aid he found,
Abandoned, and by death encompassed round.
'Twas then his sainted sire his strength renewed
With tenfold force and vigor unsubdued,
Firm as a rock, poised on its base he stood,
That braves the blast, and scorns the dashing flood.
Who shall relate, alas! what heroes died
In that dread hour on Eura's purple side.
Shade of the first of kings, do thou diffuse
Thy spirit o'er my song, be thou my muse.
Now from afar his gathering nobles came,
They died for Bourbon, and he fought for them,
When Egmont rushed with yet unrivalled force,
To check the storm and thwart the monarch's course.
Long had the chief, misled by martial pride,
Sought Henry through the combat far and wide,
Nor cared he, so his venturous arm might meet
That strife, for aught of danger or defeat.
"Bourbon," he cried, "advance; behold a foe
Prepared to plant fresh laurels on your brow;

Now let your arm its utmost might display,
Ours be the strife, let us decide the day."
He spoke, and lo! portentous from on high
A stream of lightning shot along the sky,
Slow peals of muttering thunder growled around,
Beneath the trembling soldier shook the ground.
Egmont, alas! a flattering omen draws,
And dreams that heaven shall combat in his cause,
That partial nature in his glory shared,
And by the thunder's voice his victory declared.
At the first onset with full force applied
His driving falchion reached the monarch's side,
Fast flowed a stream of his life blood, though slight
The wound, and Egmont triumphed at the sight.
But Bourbon unconcerned received the blow,
And with redoubled ardor pressed his foe;
Pleased when the field of glory could afford
A conquest hardly earned and worthy of his sword.
The stinging smart served only to provoke
His rage, and add new vigor to his stroke.
He springs upon the blow; the champion reels,
And the keen edge within his bosom feels,
O'erthrown beneath the trampling hoof he lies,
And death's dim shadow skims before his eyes,
He sees the dreary regions of the dead,
And shrinks and shudders at his father's shade.
  Then first, their leader slain, the Iberian host
Declined the fight, their vaunted spirit lost,
Like a contagion their unwarlike fear
Seized all the ranks and caught from van to rear.
General and soldier felt the same dismay,
Nor longer these command, nor those obey.
Down fall the banners, routed and o'erthrown

And yelling with unmanly shrieks they run;
Some bend the suppliant knee, submissive join
Their hands, and to the chain their wrists resign,
Some from the fierce pursuer wildly fled,
And to the river swift their footsteps sped,
There plunged downright, amid the foaming tide
They sink, and meet the death they would avoid.
The waves encumbered seem to change their course,
And the choked stream recoils upon its source.
Mayenne in the tumult of this troubled scene
Lord of himself, afflicted, yet serene,
Surveyed his loss still tranquil and sedate,
And even in ruin hoped a better fate.
D'Aumale, his eyes in burning rage suffused,
His cruel stars and dastard bands accused.
"'Tis lost," he cried, "see where the cowards fly,
Illustrious Mayenne! our task then is to die."
"Die!" said the chief, "live rather to replace
Our fortune, and sustain the cause you grace,
Live to regain the laurels we have lost,
Nor now desert us, when we need you most.
Fly then, and where they straggle o'er the plain,
Glean up the wreck and remnant of our train."
He hears, reluctant sobs his passion speaks,
And tears of anguish trickle down his cheeks,
A slow compliance sullenly he pays,
And frowning stern at the command, obeys.
Thus the proud lion whom the Moor has tamed,
And from the fierceness of his race reclaimed,
Bows down beneath his swarthy master's hand,
And bends his surly front at his command,
With lowering aspect stalks behind his lord,
And grumbles while he crouches at his word.

Meanwhile in flight unhappy Mayenne confides,
And close within the walls his shame he hides;
Prone at the monarch's feet the vanquished wait
From his award, the sentence of their fate;
When from the firmament's unfolded space
Appeared the manes of the Bourbon race;
Louis in that important hour came down,
To gaze intent upon his godlike son,
To prove if the triumphant chief could tame
His soul to mercy, and deserve his fame.
The assembled captives by their looks besought
The monarch's grace, but trembled at their lot,
When thus with gentle, but determined look,
The suppliant crowd the mighty chief bespoke.
"Be free, and use your freedom as you may,
Free to take arms against me, or obey;
On Mayenne or me let your election rest,
His be the sceptre who deserves it best,
Choose your own portion, your own fate decree,
Chains from the League, or victory with me."
Astonished that a king with glory crowned,
And lord of the subjected plains around,
Even in the lap of triumph should forego
His right of arms, and vantage o'er the foe,
His grateful captives hail him at his feet
Victorious, and rejoice in their defeat.
No longer hatred rankles in their minds,
His might subdued them, and his bounty binds,
Proudly they mingle with the monarch's train,
And turn their juster vengeance on Mayenne.
Now Bourbon merciful and mild had stayed
The carnage, and the soldier's wrath allayed;
No longer through the ranks he cleaves his way,

Fierce as the lion bearing on his prey,
But seems a bounteous deity, inclined
To quell the tempest, and to cheer mankind.
Peace o'er his brows had shed a milder grace,
And smoothed the warlike terrors of his face;
Snatched from the jaws of the devouring strife,
His captives feel themselves restored to life,
Their dangers he repels, their wants supplies,
And views and guards them with a parent's eyes.
Fame, the swift messenger of false and true,
Still as she flies increasing to the view,
O'er mountains and o'er seas, from clime to clime,
Expatiates, rapid as the flight of time.
Millions of piercing eyes to fame belong,
As many mouths still ply the restless tongue,
And round with listening ears her miscreant form is hung.
Where'er she roams, credulity is there,
And curiosity with craving ear,
And doubt, and hope, and ever-boding fear.
With the same speed she bears upon her wings
From far, the glory and the shame of kings,
And now unfolds them, eager to proclaim
Great Henry's deeds, and fill the nations with his name.
From Tagus swift to Po the tidings ran,
And echoed through the lofty Vatican.
Joy to the North the spreading sounds convey,
To Spain, confusion, terror and dismay.
Ill-fated Paris, and thou faithless League,
Ye priests, full-fraught with malice and intrigue,
How trembled then your temples, and what dread
Disastrous, hung o'er every guilty head!

But see your guardian deity appears,
See Mayenne returning to dispel your fears!
Though foiled, not lost, not hopeless though o'er-
thrown,
For still rebellious Paris is his own.
With specious gloss he covers his defeat,
Calls ruin, victory, and flight, retreat,
Confirms the doubtful, and with prudent aim
Seeks by concealing, to repair his shame.
Transient, alas! the joy that art supplies,
For cruel truth soon scattered the disguise,
The veil of falsehood from their fate withdrew,
And opened all its horrors to their view.
"Not thus," the fury cried, with raging mind,
"Shall Discord's power be conquered, and confined:
'Tis not for this these wretched walls have seen
Torrents of blood, and mountains of the slain:
'Tis not for this the raging fires have shone,
That hated Bourbon might enjoy the throne.
Henceforth by weakness be his mind assailed,
Weakness may triumph where the sword has failed.
Force is but vain; all other hopes are gone:
For Henry yields but to himself alone.
This day shall beauty's charms his bosom warm;
Subdue his valor, and unnerve his arm."
Thus Discord spoke; and, through the fields of
air,
Drawn by fierce hatred on her blood-stained car,
Swiftly repaired to Cytherea's grove
Assured of vengeance, and in search of love.
Clouds of thick darkness then obscured the day,
Nature turned pale, and horror marked her way.

CANTO IX.

The Argument.

Description of the temple of love. Discord implores his power to enervate the courage of Henry IV. The hero is detained some time by Madame d'Estrées, so well known under the name of the fair Gabrielle. Mornay disengages him from his mistress, and the king returns to the army.

Fixed on the borders of Idalia's coast,
Where sister realms[1] their kindred limits boast,
An ancient dome superior awe commands,
Whose strong foundations rose from nature's hands:
But labor since has polished every part,
And nature yielded to the toils of art.
Each circling plain the verdant myrtles crown,
Unknown to winter's desolating frown.
Pomona here her fruits profusely pours;
Here Flora sheds her variegated flowers.
Here, whilst spontaneous harvests fill the plains,
No season changes, and no wretch complains.
Here peace unfading soothes the sons of earth,
Such peace as reigned at nature's earlier birth.
With hand of soft indulgence she displays
Celestial quiet, and serenest days.
Here every lawn in plenty's robe is dressed,
With every sweet but innocency blessed.
From side to side the streams of music roll,

[1] Europe and Asia.

Whose soothing softness fascinates the soul.
In plaintive sonnets burns the lover's flame
Who boasts his weakness, and exults in shame.
Each day, encircled with the fragrant store,
The little godhead's smiles their prayers implore;
Eager they press to learn the poisonous art
At once to please and to enter the heart.
Delusive hope, whose charms serenely shine,
Conducts the train to love's enchanting shrine.
The beauteous graces half-unveiled advance,
Indulge the song, and join the decent dance.
Voluptuous pleasure on the velvet plain
In calm tranquillity attends the strain.
Lo! by her side the heart-enchaining sighs
Fixed silence strongly speaking to the eyes;
The amorous transports, and the soft desires,
Which fan the bosom to the fiercest fires.
Thus smiles the alluring entrance of the dome:
When far within the daring footsteps roam,
What scenes of horror round the altar roll,
And shake the libertine's presuming soul!
No sounds harmonious feast the ravished ears,
No more the lovely train of joys appears.
Conscious imprudence, murmurs, fears, and hate
With darkness blast the splendors of the state.
Stern jealousy, whose faltering step obeys
Each fell suspicion that her bliss betrays;
Ungoverned rage, with sharpest venom stored,
Rears in the van his unrelenting sword.
These malice joins, who with perfidious face
Smiles at the triumphs of the savage race.
Pensive repentance, shuddering in the rear,
Heaves the deep groan, and showers the plenteous tear.

Full in the centre of this horrid court,
Where pleasure's fell companions all resort,
Love waves forever his fantastic rod,
At once a cruel, and a tender god.
His infant power the fates of mortals bears,
With wanton smiles dispensing peace, and wars.
Smooth flows deceit's insinuating art
Which lifts the captive, animated heart.
He counts his triumphs from the splendid throne
While prostrate sons of pride the conqueror own.
Careless of good he plies his savage skill,
And dwells applauding on each deed of ill.
Now Discord opens through the ranks of joy
Her vengeful passage to the kindred boy.
Fierce in her hand the brandished torches glow,
Her eyeballs flash, and blood distains her brow.
"Where then," she cries, "thy formidable darts!
Recline they pointed for more stubborn hearts?
If e'er my venom, mingled with thy fire,
Has fanned the flame, and raised the passion higher,
If oft for thee I trouble nature's laws,
Rise, fly to vengeance of my injured cause.
Crushed by a victor king my snakes are laid,
Who joins the olive to the laurel's shade.
Amid the tumults of a civil war
Meek-stepping Clemency attends his car;
Fixed to the standards, waving in the wind,
She soothes in Discord's spite the rebel mind.
One victory gained, my throne, my empire falls;
Lo! Henry showers his rage on Paris' walls.
He flies to fight, to conquer, and forgive;
Fast bound in brazen chains must Discord live.
'Tis thine to check the torrent of his course,

And drop soft poison on his valor's source.
Yes, bend the victim to thy conquering dart,
And quell each virtue of his stubborn heart.
Of old (and well thou knowest) thy sovereign care
Bowed great Alcides to the imperial fair.
By thee proud Antony's enervated mind
For Cleopatra's form each thought resigned;
In flight inglorious o'er the ocean hurled
For her he quits the empire of the world.
Henry alone resists thy dread command,
Go, blast the laurels in his daring hand.
His brows entwine with myrtle's amorous charms,
And sink the slumbering warrior in thy arms.
Fly to support; he shakes my tottering throne:
Go, shield an empire, and a cause thine own."
  The monster spoke: the trembling roof around
Returns the horrors of the dreadful sound.
Stretched on his flowery couch, the listening god
With artful smiles consented at her nod.
Armed with his golden darts resolved he flies
Clearing the azure brightness of the skies.
With pleasures, sports, and graces in his train
The zephyrs bear him to the Gallic plain.
  Straight he discovers with malicious joy
The feeble Simois and the fields of Troy;
And laughs, reflecting in those seats renowned
O'er many a palace mouldering on the ground.
Venice from far, fair city! strikes his sight,
The prodigy of earth, and art's delight;
Which towers supreme as ocean's godhead gave
Her powerful empire o'er the encircling wave.
Sicilia's plain his rapid flight retards,
Where his own genius nursed the pastoral bards.

Where fame reports through secret paths he led
The wandering waves from amorous Alpheus' bed.
Now quitting Arethusa's lovely shore
Swift to Vauclusia's seats his course he bore;
Asylum soft: in life's serener days
Where lovesick Petrarch sighed his pensive lays.
From there his eyes survey the favorite strand
Where Anet's[1] walls uprose at his command:
Where art's rich toils superior reverence claim,
And still beams forth Diana's ciphered name.
There on her tomb the joys, and graces shower
In grateful memory each fragrant flower.
Now to the wanderer Ivry's plain appears:
The monarch, ready for severer cares,
There first with softer pleasures soothes his breast,
And lulls his thunders to a transient rest.
Around his side the warrior youth displayed
Pursue the labors of the sylvan shade.
The godhead triumphs in his future pain,
Sharpens his arrows, and prepares his chain,
The winds, which erst he smoothed, his nod alarms;
He speaks, and sets the elements in arms.
From every side he calls the furious storms;
A weight of clouds the face of heaven deforms.
The impetuous torrent rushes from the sky;
The thunder rolls, the livid lightnings fly:
Each boisterous brother at his mandate springs
And earth lies shadowed with their murky wings.
Bright Phœbus sinks with night's incumbent load,
And conscious nature shudders at the god.

[1] Anet was built by Henry II. for Diana de Poitiers, whose ciphers are intermixed with all the ornaments of that castle. It is situated not far from the plains of Ivry.

O'er the dark plains through miry, dubious ways
Alone, and comfortless the monarch strays:
When watchful love displays the torch's light,
Whose twinkling radiance strikes upon his sight.
The hostile star, with fatal joy betrayed,
He swiftly follows through the dreary shade.
Such fatal joy deluded wanderers show,
Led by the vapor's transitory glow;
The guide malignant through the midnight gloom
Quits not the wretch, but leads him to his doom.
Once in the horrors of this lone retreat
Roamed a fair virgin's solitary feet.
Silent, the centre of the fort within,
She waits her father from the battle's din;
Loyal in council, veteran in the plain,
Who shone the foremost of his sovereign's train:
D'Estrées[1] her name, and nature's guardian care
Had showered her treasures to adorn the fair.
Beauty less fair the Grecian maid possessed,
Whose guilt betrayed her Menelaus' rest.
With charms inferior Cleopatra glowed,
Whose eyes the lord of Italy subdued,
While to the shore the enamored Cydnians move,
And incense shed as to the queen of love.
The nymph was now at that unsteady age
When headstrong passions all the mind engage.

[1] Gabrielle d'Estrées, of an ancient family in Picardy, daughter and granddaughter of the grand master of the ordnance; espoused to the Lord of Liancourt, and since Duchess of Beaufort. Henry IV. became violently in love with her during the civil wars; he went sometimes in a private dress to see her. One day he even disguised himself as a peasant, passed through the midst of the enemy's guards, and arrived at her house, not without some danger of being taken.

No lovers yet their sighing vows impart,
Though formed for love, yet generous was her heart.
Thus the fair beauties of the blushing rose
Coy in the spring to wanton zephyr close:
But the full lustre of their stores display
To the kind influence of a summer's day.
  Cupid, preparing to ensnare the maid,
Slyly approaches in disguise arrayed.
No dart, no torch his chubby hands employ,
In voice, and figure as an artless boy.
"From yonder stream to this enchanting dome
The hapless Mayenne's tremendous conqueror come."
Full through her soul the soft infection ran;
She feign would captivate the godlike man.
A livelier bloom her graceful features prove,
Which crowns the triumphs of applauding love.
What could he doubt? with charms celestial spread
The attractive virgin to the king he led.
With double glow each ornament of art
In nature's guise enslaves the enamored heart.
Her golden tresses floating in the air
Now kiss the rising bosom of the fair;
Now start to view the heavenly sweets displayed
By native innocence more lovely made.
No stern, no gloomy frown, which puts to flight
Each thought of love, of beauty, and delight;
But the mild softness of a decent shame
The cheek just tipping with the purest flame:
Commanding reverence, which excites desires,
And sheds when conquered love's increasing fires.
  Now the arch god with each enchanting grace
Diffused resistless beauties o'er the place.

The plenteous myrtle with spontaneous birth
Springs from the bosom of the liberal earth.
Its amorous foliage decorates the glade,
And woos the thoughtless to its fatal shade.
Till hands unseen the entangled step betray;
Fear bids depart, but pleasure bids them stay.
Soft through the shade a soothing Lethe rolls,
Where happy lovers with inebriate souls
Quaff long oblivion to departed fame;
So unresisted love's all-conquering flame!
How changed the scene! here every bosom glows;
Poured from each sweet the entrancing nectar flows.
Love sounds throughout: around, the feathered choir
Indulge the song and burn with mutual fire.
The hind arising ere the dawn of day
To Ceres' golden treasures bends his way;
Now stops aghast: now heaves the plaintive sighs,
And feels the new born passion with surprise.
No more his soul the toils of harvest move;
He dwells delighted on the scenes of love:
While heedless of her flock the maiden stands,
And drops the spindle from her faltering hands.
Could fair d'Estrées resist the magic charm?
What power can guard 'gainst love's prevailing arm.
Overcome by youth, a hero and the god
She yields her virgin bosom to their nod.
Meanwhile the king with dauntless soul prepares
In thought to mingle with the battle's cares.
Some subtle demon plies his secret art,
And free-born virtue sighing quits the heart.
To softer scenes his amorous soul betrayed
Sees, hears, and loves alone the heavenly maid.

But now the chieftains of the embattled band
With ardent vows their absent king demand;
They shuddered for his life, but little knew
Their fears were only to his glory due:
Immersed in grief the soldier's conquering pride
Sinks to despair, no Henry for their guide.
Thy guardian power, O France, no longer stays
To grant continuance of the soft delays:
At Louis' nod descending from the skies
Swift to the succor of his son he flies.
Alighting now o'er earth's extended round
He seeks a mind for wisdom's stores renowned,
Not where pale, hungry, speechless students claim
Fixed in a midnight gloom her sacred name,
But in fair Ivry, midst the din of arms,
Where the flushed warriors glow with conquest's charms.
At length the genius stays his ardent flight,
Where Calvin's floating banners spread to sight.
There Mornay he addressed; when reason leads,
Her solid influence consecrates our deeds.
As o'er the heathen world she poured her ray,
Whose virtues Christians blushing might survey,
Reason Aurelius' sentiments refined,
And showered ideas over Plato's mind.
Severe, but friendly Mornay knew the art
At once to mend, and captivate the heart.
His deeds more reverence than his doctrines move,
Each virtue met his fond, parental love.
Full steeled to pleasure, covetous of toils
He looked on dangers with undaunted smiles.
No poisonous frauds of palaces control
His nobly-stubborn purity of soul.

Thus Arethusa's genial waters flow
Soft to the bosom of the deep below,
A crystal pure, unconscious of a stain,
Spite of the billows of the foaming main.
The generous Mornay by the goddess led
Haste to the seats, where rapturous pleasure shed
Her soothing opiate on the victor's breast,
And lulled awhile the fates of France to rest.
Triumphant love each lavish charm employs
To blast his glory with redoubled joys.
A waste of transports fill the round of day,
Transports which fly too swiftly to decay.
To vengeance fired the little god descried
Mornay with heaven-born wisdom for his guide.
Full at the warrior-chief he points his dart
To lull his senses, and enthrall his heart.
Thick fall the blunted shafts, Mornay awaits
The king's return, and eyes the accursed retreats.
Fast by the stream, 'midst nature's rich perfume,
Sacred to silent ease where myrtles bloom,
D'Estrées on Henry lavished all her charms,
Melting he glowed, and languished in her arms.
No cooling change their blissful moments know,
Soft from their eyes the tears of rapture flow;
Tears, which redouble every fond delight,
And heavenly feelings of the soul excite;
Flushed with the full-blown rage of keen desires,
Which love alone can paint, for love alone inspires.
The wanton youth unfolds the hero's vest,
While smiling pleasures fan his soul to rest.
One holds the cuirass reeking from the plain,
One grasps the sword, yet never worn in vain;
And laughs, while poising in his hand he shows

The bulwark of the throne, and terror of its foes.
From Discord's voice the strains of insult roll,
Each cruel transport brooding in her soul,
With active fury at the favoring hour
To rouse the serpent of confederate power.
While Henry riots in the soft repose,
She wakes to vengeance his relentless foes.
Now in the fragrant gardens of delight
Mornay appears: he blushes at the sight
Their startled bosoms mutual fears engage,
And a dead silence chains the approaching sage.
But looks in silence bowed to earth impart
A powerful language to the sovereign's heart;
And sadness lowering in the clouded face
Proclaims at once his weakness, and disgrace.
Ill had another taken Mornay's care,
Love from the guilty few, accusers share.
"Fear not," he cries, "our anger; rest at ease;
Who points my error cannot fail to please:
Worthy of thee our bosom shall remain;
'Tis well: and Henry is himself again.
Love now resigns that virtue he betrayed:
Fly, let us quit this soft, inglorious shade.
Yes, quit the scenes, where my rebellious flame
Would fondling still the silken fetters frame.
Self-conquest surely boasts the noblest charms,
We'll brave the power of love in glory's arms;
Scatter destruction o'er the extended shore,
And sheathe our error in the Spaniard's gore."
These generous words the sage's soul inspire:
"Yes, now my sovereign beams with native fire.
Each rebel passion feels thy conquering reins,
O great protector of thy country's plains.

Love adds fresh lustre to the blaze of fame,
For triumphs there superior greatness claim."
He said; the monarch hastens to depart,
But oh! what sorrows load his amorous heart!
Still, as he flies, he cannot but adore,
His tears he censures, yet he weeps the more.
Forced by the sage, attracted by the fair,
He flies, returns, and quits her in despair.
D'Estrées unable to sustain the strife
Falls prostrate robbed of color, as of life.
A sudden night invades her beauteous eyes;
Love who perceived it, sent forth dreadful cries.
Pierced to the soul, lest death's eternal shade
Should rob his empire of the lovely maid:
Should spoil the lustre of so fair a frame,
Destined through France to spread the genial flame.
Wrapt in his arms, again her eyelids move,
And gently open to the voice of love.
The king she names, the king demands in vain,
Now looks, now closes her bright eyes again.
Love bathed in sorrow for the suffering fair
Recalled her sinking spirit by his prayer;
With flattering hopes her solaced soul betrayed,
And soothed those evils which himself had made.
Mornay of steady, and relentless mind,
Led on the monarch still but half resigned.
Firm force and godlike virtue point the way,
While glory's hands the laurel wreath display;
And love, indignant as the victor's fame,
Flies far from Anet to conceal his shame.

CANTO X.

The Argument.

The king returns to the army. Renews the siege. The duel between Turenne and d'Aumale. A famine in the city. The king relieves the inhabitants. Heaven at length recompenses his virtues. Truth descends to enlighten him. Paris opens her gates and the war is finished.

Those fatal moments lost in soft repose
Had waked the courage of the vanquished foes.
Rebellion breathed again, and faction's schemes
Flushed the deluded throng with golden dreams.
Yet vain their hopes, for full with generous fame
And active zeal the martial Bourbon came,
Eager to reap the harvest he had sown
And make the field of conquest all his own.
Again his banners waved aloft in air,
And Paris saw them with renewed despair.
Again the chief before her walls appears
Scarce yet recovered from a siege's fears;
Those very walls, where yet sulphurous smoke
With desolation marks the cannon's stroke,
Which now with ruins had bestrewed the land
Had not compassion checked the hero's hand;
When the bright angel, whose obedience still
Guardian of France, performs the Almighty's will,
Bade his soft breast with tender mercies glow,
Withheld his arm, and stopped the falling blow.
Through the king's camp no voice was heard around

But songs of mirth, and joy's tumultuous sound.
While each brave warrior, anxious for the fray,
With eyes impatient marks the destined prey.
Meantime the haughty legions all dismayed,
Pressed round their prudent chief, and sued for aid;
When thus d'Aumale, of brave impetuous soul,
Abhorring counsel, and above control;
"We have not yet so learned our warfare here
To sneak to hiding-holes, and crouch for fear,
Cursed be the man whose counsel thither tends;
The foe comes forward—let us meet them, friends.
Not tamely wait till other vantage calls,
And rust in sloth beneath these coward walls;
On then, and conquer—fortune oft will spare
A smile to crown the efforts of despair.
Frenchmen attacked, already are o'erthrown—
Seek then your safety from yourselves alone.
Ye chiefs, who hear me, haste where glory calls,
Know, soldiers, know your leaders are your walls."
He spoke—amazed the Leaguers heard each sound,
And turned their eyes in silence to the ground.
He blushed with shame, and in each leader's face
Read their refusal, and his own disgrace.
"Ye will not follow then, ye heroes tame,
Nor wish I basely to survive the shame;
Well—shrink at dangers still—so shall not I —
Alone I go—to conquer or to die."
He spoke; and from the city gate in martial pride
Boldly advanced with firm impetuous stride.
Before his steps the shrill-tongued herald went,
To hurl defiance at each warrior's tent.
E'en to the king's abode the herald came,

And challenged combat in the hero's name.
"Ye daring sons of glory," loud he cried,
"Now be your valor with your fortune tried,
D'Aumale in single combat waits you here,
By me he calls to arms—stand forth, appear."
The valiant chiefs the desperate challenge heard,
Their zeal rekindling at each haughty word,
Each warrior stern, impatient for the fray,
Hoped the king's voice, and hailed the glorious day.
Courage in all had formed an equal right.
Turenne alone found favor in his sight.
"Go," said the prince, "chastise the daring foe,
France to thy hands shall all her glory owe;
Remember, soldier, 'tis a glorious cause,
Thy own, thy king's, thy country, and thy laws:
I'll arm thee for the fight"—the monarch said,
And from his girdle loosed the shining blade.
When thus Turenne—"By this good sword I swear,
By thee, my king, each subject's darling care,
Thus nobly honored in my prince's voice,
My ready zeal shall never shame thy choice."
He spoke; while manly valor flushed his face,
And his heart sprung to meet the king's embrace;
Then to the field, impetuous as a flood,
Rushed where d'Aumale the daring champion stood.
To Paris' walls ran all the Leaguer-bands,
While round their king his faithful army stands.
With steadfast eye, which anxious care revealed,
Each side beheld their champion take the field.
While voice and gesture on each part unite
To warm each hero for the dreadful fight.
Meantime a cloud the vaulted sky deforms,
Pregnant it seemed with more than common storms,

While from its womb of darkness, strange to tell,
Burst forth in flames the monstrous brood of hell.
There was hot Zeal, which frantic leaps all bounds,
And Discord smiling on her thousand wounds,
There artful Policy designing fly,
With heart of falsehood and with scowling eye;
There the mad demon too of battles stood,
All Leaguer-gods and drunk with human blood.
Hither they haste, and land on Paris' walls,
D'Aumale, their League, the cause, their interest calls.

When lo! an angel from the azure sky,
The faithful servant of the God on high,
Descended—round his head in splendor play
Beams that eclipse the lustre of the day.
On wings of fire he shaped his cheerful flight,
And marked his passage with a train of light.
A fruitful olive-branch one hand sustained,
Presage of happy days and peace regained.
His other hand upheld a flaming sword,
And shook the terrors of the eternal Lord;
That sword with which the avenging angel armed
Smote the first-born—confounded and disarmed
Aghast at once shrank all the fiends of hell,
While to the ground their pointless weapons fell.
And resolution sickened all o'erthrown
By some resistless force from hands unknown.
So Dagon worshipped on Philistia's shore,
Whose purple altars ran with human gore;
Before the ark with tottering ruin nods,
And the fallen idol owns the God of Gods.

Paris, the king, the army, heaven, and hell
Witnessed the combat—at the trumpets' swell

On to the field the ready warriors came,
Conscious of valor, and a thirst for fame.
Their hands unused the cumbrous weight to wield,
Disdained to fight beneath the glittering shield,
The specious armor of inglorious knight
Proof 'gainst all blows, and dazzling to the sight;
They scorned the equipment of such coward dress,
Which lengthening combat, made all danger less.
In courage firm advanced each haughty lord,
Man against man, and sword opposed to sword.
"O God of kings," the royal champion cried,
"Judge thou my cause, and combat on my side;
Courage I vaunt not of, an idle name,
When heavenly justice bars the warrior's claim;
Not from myself, I dare the glorious fight,
My God shall arm me who approves my right."
To whom d'Aumale, "In deeds of valor known
Be my reliance on this arm alone.
Our fate depends on us, the mind afraid
Prays to his God in vain for needful aid.
Calm in the heavens He views our equal fight,
And smiling conquest proves the hero's right.
"The god of wars is valor"—stern he cried,
And with a look of fell contemptuous pride
Gazed on his rival, whose firm modest mind
Spoke in his face, courageous and resigned.

Now sounds the trumpet, to the dubious fray
Rush the brave chiefs impatient of delay.
Whate'er of skill, whate'er of strength is known,
By turns each daring champion proves his own.
While all around the troops with anxious sight,
Half pleased, half frighted, view the desperate fight.
The flashing swords cast forth promiscuous rays,

Blinding the eye-sight with their trembling blaze,
As when the sun athwart the silver streams
Darts his strong light, and breaks in quivering beams.
The thronging crowds around with eyes intent
Look on amazed, and wait the dread event.
With nervous strength and fury uncontrolled,
Full of himself, and as a lion bold
Seems stern d'Aumale; the whiles his rival brave,
Nor proud of strength, nor passion's headlong slave,
Collected in himself awaits his foe,
Smiles at his rage, and wards each furious blow.
In vain d'Aumale his utmost efforts tries,
His arm no more its wonted strength supplies,
While cool Turenne the combat's rage renews,
Attacks with vigor, and with skill pursues,
Till proud d'Aumale sinks baffled to the ground,
And his hot blood flows reeking from the wound;
The champion falls; hell echoes with despair,
And dreadful sounds affright the troubled air.
"League, thou art all o'erthrown, the prize is won,
Bourbon, thou hast it now—our reign is done."
The wretched people with lamenting cries
Attest their grief, and rend the vaulted skies;
D'Aumale all weak, and stretched upon the sand,
His glittering sword fallen useless from his hand,
Fainting, yet strives fresh vigor to regain,
And seems to threaten still, though all in vain.
Fain would he speak, while deep-drawn laboring breath
Denies him utterance in the pangs of death.
Shame's quickening sense augments his furious air,
And his red eyeballs flash extreme despair.

He heaves, he sinks, he struggles all in vain,
His loosened limbs fall lifeless on the plain;
To Paris' walls he lifts his closing eye,
Then dies indignant with a desperate sigh.
Mayenne, thou sawest him die, and at each look
Thy trembling nerves with shuddering horrors shook,
Then to thy mind thy own approaching fall
Came full, and thou wast conquered with d'Aumale.
The soldiers now to Paris' gates repair,
And with slow steps their breathless hero bear.
Entranced with woe, all silent, and amazed
Upon the bleeding corpse the people gazed,
That deep-gashed wound, that front with gore bespread,
That mouth now fallen, and that unpropped head.
Those eyes which e'en in death tremendous stare,
While the fixed sight cast forth a livid glare,
They saw—compassion, shame, disgrace and fear
Choked up each cry, and dried the falling tear.
'Twas solemn stillness all. When lo, a sound
Which teemed with horror pierced the welkin round.
For now the assailants with tumultuous cries
Demand the attack, and hope the promised prize.
Meantime the king, whom milder thoughts engage,
Calmed their high transports, and repressed their rage.
Stubborn howe'er, and adverse to his will,
Howe'er ungrateful, 'twas his country still;
Hated by subjects whom he wished to save,
The mercies they denied, his virtue gave;
Pleased if his bounty could their crimes efface,
And force the wretched to accept of grace.

All desperate means he shuddered to employ,
He sought to conquer Paris, not destroy,
Famine perhaps, and lengthened scenes of woe
Might bend to law a proud mistaken foe;
Brought up in plenty, with abundance fed,
To ease and all the train of pleasures bred;
His people pressed by want's impulsive sting
Might seek for mercy from their patriot king.
Rebellion's sons, whom vengeance fain would spare,
Mistook for weakness Henry's pious care.
His valor all forgot, in stubborn pride
They braved their master, and the king defied.
But when no more along the silver Seine
The freighted vessels bear the golden grain,
When desperate famine with her meagre train
With death her consort spreads her baneful reign,
In vain the wretch sends forth his piteous cries,
Looks up in vain for food and gasping dies.
The rich no more preserve their wasting health,
But pine with hunger in the midst of wealth.
No sound of joy the afflicted city knows,
No sound, but such as witnessed direful woes.
No more their heads with festive chaplets crowned,
In songs of joy they send the goblet round.
No wines provoke excess, no savory meats
Quicken the jaded appetite. Through the lone streets,
Emaciate, pale, with dead dull ghastly glare
They wander victims of the fiend Despair.
The weak old man worn out with hunger's rage
Sees his child perish in its cradled age;
Here drops a family entire, and there

Grovelling in dust, and worn with meagre care,
The haggard wretches in life's latest stage
Fight for an offal with relentless rage.
Fain would the living prey upon the dead,
While the dry bones are kneaded into bread.
What will not misery do? This cursed repast
Promotes the work of death, and proves their last.
Meantime the priests, those reverend sons of prayer
Who preach up fasting which they never share,
Battened in plenty, deaf to hunger's cries,
Which from their bounty met no wished supplies:
Yet went they forth with true fanatic zeal
To preach those virtues which they could not feel.
To the poor wretch, death hanging on his eyes,
Their liberal hand would ope the friendly skies;
To some they talked of vengeance sent from God,
And Henry punished with the Almighty's rod;
Of Paris saved by heaven's immediate love,
And manna dropping from the clouds above;
O'erawed by power, by artful priests deceived,
The crowd obsequious what they taught believed;
Submissive, half content, resigned their breath,
Nay, happy too, they triumphed in their death.
With foreign troops, to swell affliction's tide
The famished city swarmed on every side;
Their breasts where pity never learned to glow
Lusted for rapine, and rejoiced in woe.
These came from haughty Belgia's plains, and those
Helvetia's monsters, hireling friends or foes.
To mercy deaf, on misery's sons they press
And snatch the little from extreme distress.
Not for the soldier's plunder, hidden store,

And heaped up riches, useful now no more;
Not urged by lust, and lured by beauty's charms,
To force the virgin from her mother's arms;
Their murderous torments raged for food concealed
Supports laid up, and pittance unrevealed.
A woman—God! must faithful memory tell
A deed which bears the horrid stamp of hell!
Their flinty hearts which never felt remorse
Robbed of her little all with brutal force.
One tender infant left, her late fond care
The frantic mother eyed with wild despair.
Then furious all at once, with murderous blade
Rushed where the dear devoted offspring played;
The smiling babe stretched forth its little arms;
Its helpless age, sweet looks, and guileless charms
Spoke daggers to her, whilst her bosom burns
With maddening rage, remorse, and love by turns.
Fain would she backward turn, and strives to shun
The wretched deed which famine wishes done.
Thrice did she raise the sword, and all dismayed
Thrice did she trembling drop the bloodless blade.
Till furious grown in hollow voice she cries:
"Cursed be the fruitful bed, and nuptial ties,
And thou unhappy offspring of my womb,
Brought into being to receive thy doom,
Didst thou accept this idle boon of life
To die by famine, or the tyrant's strife?
Shouldst thou escape their unrelenting rage
Will pinching hunger spare thy softer age?
Then wherefore shouldst thou live? to weep in vain
A wretched wanderer o'er thy parent slain.
No, die with me, ere keen reflection knows
With bitter anguish to augment thy woes.

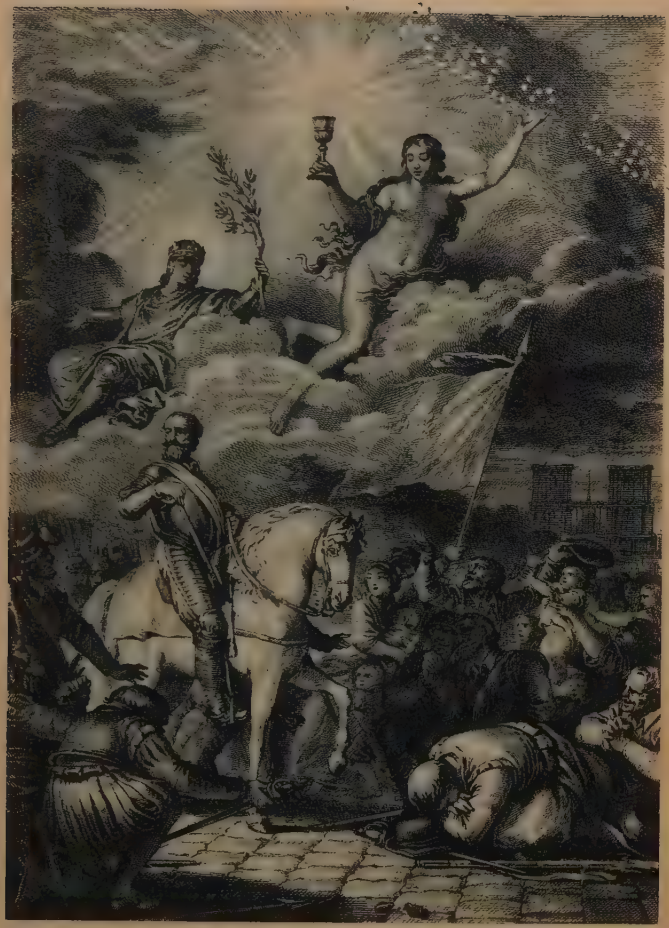
Give me—thou shalt—nor wait the formal grave,
Give back the blood thy helpless mother gave.
I will entomb thee, and the world shall see
A desperate crime unheard of yet in me."
She stopped, and frantic with extreme despair
Plunged the keen poniard in her darling heir.
Hither by hunger drawn, the ruffians sped
While yet the mother on her infant fed.
Their eyes with eager joy the place survey
Like savage tigers gloating on their prey.
With furious wish they scan the mansion o'er,
Then rush in rage and burst the jarring door.
When, dreadful sight! a form with horror wild,
That seemed a woman, o'er a murdered child
Set all aghast, and in his reeking blood
Bathed her fell hands, and sought a present food.
"Yes," cried the wretch, "the bloody deed is done,
Look there, inhuman monsters—'tis my son.
These hands had never worn this purple hue,
Nor this dear offspring perished but for you.
Now, ruffians, now with happy transport strike,
Feed on the mother and the babe alike.
Why heaves your breast with such unusual awe?
Have I alone offended nature's law?
Why stare you all on me? such horrid food
Befits ye best, ye lustful sons of blood."
Furious she spoke, and staring, desperate wild,
Plunged home the sword, and died upon her child.
The dreadful sight all power of speech controls,
And harrows up e'en these barbarian souls.
In dire amaze they cast their eyes around,
And fear an angry God in every sound;
While the whole city, at the scene dismayed,

Called loud for death, the wretches' last kind aid.
E'en to the king the dreadful rumor ran,
His bowels yearned—he felt himself a man.
At each recital tender passions rose,
And tearful mercy wept a nation's woes.
"O God," he cried, "to whom my thoughts are bare,
Who knowest all I can, and all I dare,
To Thee I lift these hands unstained with blood,
Thou knowest I war not 'gainst my country's good.
To me impute not nor their crimes nor woes,
Let Mayenne say, from whence the ruin flows.
For all these ills let him advance the plea,
Which tyrants only use, necessity;
To be thy country's foe, Mayenne, be thine,
To be its father, be that duty mine.
I am their father, and would wish to spare
Rebellious children with a father's care.
Should my compassion then but madly arm
A desperate rebel to extend his harm?
Or must I lose my regal crown to show
Indulgent mercy on a subject foe?
Yes—let him live, and if such mercy cost
So dear a price as all my kingdoms lost,
Let this memorial dignify my grave,
To rule o'er foes I sought not, but to save."
He spoke, and bade the storms of vengeance cease,
And hushed the tumults with returning peace.
Paris again her cheerful accents heard,
And willing troops obeyed their Henry's word.
Now on the walls the throng impetuous swarms,
And all around, pale, trembling, wasted forms,
Stalk like the ghosts, which from the shades of night,

Compelled by magic force, revisit light,
When potent magi with enchantments fell
Invoke the powers below, and startle hell.
What admiration swelled each happy breast
To find a guardian in their foe professed!
By their own chiefs deserted and betrayed,
An adverse army lent a willing aid.
These pikes, which late dealt slaughter all around,
With desperate force no longer reared to wound,
Now kindly raised to second Henry's care,
On their stained points the cheering nurture bear.
"Are these," said they, "the monsters of mankind?
Are these the workings of a tyrant mind?
This the proud king, sad outcast of his God,
His passions' easy slave, and people's rod?
No, 'tis the image of that power above,
Who acts with justice, and delights in love;
He triumphs, yet forgives, nor seeks to show
Revenge's malice on a conquered foe.
Nay more, he comforts, and with royal grace
Extends assistance to a rebel race.
Be Discord banished from this glorious hour,
And our blood flow but to cement his power;
And steady zeal, no longer faction's slave,
For him employ that life he wished to save."
Such was the language Paris' sons expressed,
While soft emotions filled each grateful breast.
But who alas! can strong assurance ground
On sickly friendship, which exhales in sound?
What hopes from such a race so light and vain,
Who only idly rise to fall again?
For now the priests, whose cursed designing arts
Had raised the flames of discord in their hearts,

Flocked round the people—"O ye sons of shame,
Cowards in war, and Christians but in name,
Is't thus your weakness from your God would fly,
Think on the martyrs and resolve to die;
Think on the paths their holy army trod,
Nor for preserving life, offend your God.
Think of the crown religion's sure to bring,
Nor wait for pardon from a tyrant king.
Fain would he lead your steady faith astray,
And warp your conscience to his dangerous way.
With zeal defend religion's holy laws,
Death has no terrors in a Christian cause."
So spake they vengeful, and with purpose dire
Blackened the king, till fell rebellion's fire
Flamed out afresh, and full of desperate strife
They scorn to own the debt of forfeit life.
Midst all these clamors Henry's virtue known
Pierced through the skies to God's eternal throne.
Louis, from whom the Bourbon race begun,
Saw now the roll of time completely done,
When his son's error should be purged away,
And pure religion beam her certain ray.
Then from his breast fled all the train of fears,
And faith established dried up all his tears.
Then soothing hope, and fond paternal love,
Proved his sure guides to heavenly paths above.
Before all time, in pure effulgence bright,
The God of gods had placed His throne of light;
Heaven is beneath His feet; power, wisdom, love,
Compose His essence; while the saints above,
Triumphant hosts, partake unfading joys,
Which neither grief disturbs, nor time destroys.
He speaks, the earth is changed, and frail mankind,

The sport of error, and in councils blind,
Events perceived, but causes undescried,
Accuse God's wisdom in their selfish pride.
Such were the Goths of old, and barbarous Huns,
The numerous Turk, and Afric's tawny sons.
All nations have their mighty tyrant, all
Rise in their turns, and hasten to their fall.
Yet not forever tyrants sway their land,
Oft falls the sceptre in more favored hands,
And heaven's vicegerents, in their actions known,
Dispense God's favors from a royal throne.
Now Louis, fire of Bourbon's glorious race,
In plaintive words addressed the throne of grace.
"Lord of the world, if from these azure skies
Thou lookest on mortals with considering eyes,
See how rebellion's hateful treason stains
The generous sons on famed Lutetia's plains.
If all unmindful of a subject's awe,
They spurn their king, nor heed the royal law,
'Tis for Thy faith their ardent bosoms feel,
And disobedience springs from holy zeal.
Behold the king, of tried illustrious worth,
The terror, love, example of the earth,
With so much virtues couldst Thou form his mind,
To leave him pathless, and in errors blind?
Must Thy most perfect work forego all bliss,
And only Henry thank his God amiss?
Let him henceforth mistaken notions shun,
Give France a master and the Church a son.
The ready subjects to their monarch bring
And to his subjects restore the king.
So in Thy praise may all our hearts unite,
And a whole city worship God aright."



His humble prayers the eternal Maker heard,
And spoke assent; earth trembled at His word:
The Leaguers stood amazed, and Henry's breast
Glowed with that faith which God Himself impressed.
When from her mansion, near the eternal throne,
Truth dear to mortals, though sometimes unknown,
Descends a veil of clouds, with ample shade
Concealed from mortal ken the lovely maid,
Till by degrees, as at the approach of day,
The shadowy mist melts all dissolved away:
Full to the sight now all the goddess shone,
Clear as heaven's light, and cheerful as the sun.
Henry, whose bosom from his early youth
Had felt the longing of eternal truth,
With faith avowed, and pure religion glows,
Which baffles man, and reason darkly knows;
With will convinced reveres the holy see,
Which always one, howe'er dispersed and free;
Beneath one chief adores in every place,
In all her happy saints, God's wondrous grace.
Christ, for our sins who shed His purest blood,
Now for His chosen flock, the living food,
To the king's self who bows with secret dread,
Shows his true godhead in the hallowed bread;
The monarch, deep impressed with holy awe,
Adores the wonders of the sacred law.
Now sainted Louis, at the Lord's command,
The peaceful olive waving in his hand,
Came down from heaven; a ready guide to bring
To Paris' opening walls their convert king.
In God's own name, by whom all monarchs reign,
He entered Paris; while the Leaguer train

Bow submissive; e'en the meddling priests
Are dumb, and all around with jocund feasts
And cries of joy the vaulted heavens ring,
And hail at once a conquerer, father, king.
Henceforth all nations owned his regal state,
Too soon determined, as begun too late.
The Austrian trembled; and by Rome approved,
In Henry's virtues was his Rome beloved.
Discord was exiled from Lutetia's shore,
And Mayenne brave, a rebel now no more,
Himself his province, in subjection brings,
The best of subjects to the best of kings.

END OF THE HENRIADE.

LETTERS.

LETTERS.

[The formal and familiar letters of Voltaire exhibit the graces of style which characterize the most versatile as also the most lucid of French writers. Some of the subtler nuances of expression elude the best translators, through the more rigid forms of the English language. The selected letters here given are from Smollett, Franklin, Parton, and our editorial staff. They reflect the play of the ever-alert mind and catch the happy turns of wit and pithy expression that brighten every page of the records of Voltaire's life-long intercourse with his multitude of friends, from humble dependents to personages of state who sought the honor of his acquaintance.]

THE PRINCE ROYAL OF PRUSSIA TO M. DE VOLTAIRE.

AUGUST 8, 1736.

Sir.—Though I have not the honor of being personally acquainted with you, I have long known you in your works. They are treasures of genius, if I may be allowed the expression, pieces wrought with so much taste, that we discover new beauties in them at every reading. I think I have discovered in them the character of their ingenious author, who does an honor to our age and to human nature. The great men among the moderns will one day be obliged to you, and to you alone, for turning the balance in their favor, in case the controversy

and content myself with admiring it in private. I am not ignorant that the faith of princes is not thought very respectable in these days; but I hope you will not let yourself be prepossessed by vulgar prejudices, and that you will make an exception in my favor.

I shall think myself more rich in possessing your works than I could ever be made by all the transitory favors of fortune, of which we are deprived by the same chance that bestows them on us. The first—I mean your works—we may make our own by the assistance of memory, and they last as long as our memory lasts. As I know the weakness of mine, I hesitate a long time upon the choice of things worthy to be deposited in it.

If poetry were still upon the same footing as formerly, that is to say, if poets were capable only of composing insipid idylliums, eclogues eternally written upon the same plan, trifling stanzas, or elegiac strains, I should renounce the art forever; but you ennoble it, you point out new paths, paths unknown to . . . . and to . . . . Your poetry has qualities which make it respectable, and worthy to be the study and admiration of all men of taste: they comprise a complete course of morality, by which men are taught both to act and to think; virtue is therein painted in its most beautiful colors: the idea of true glory is ascertained, and inspires us with the love of virtue in a manner so delicate, that whoever has read your works is fired with an ambition to tread in your footsteps. How many times have I said to myself: "Wretch, lay down a burden which thou art unable to bear; no

man can imitate Voltaire without having abilities equal to his." In those moments I perceived that the advantages of birth are of no consequence; they are distinctions foreign to ourselves, and adorn only the outside. How much preferable to them are the talents of the mind! How much are we indebted to those whom nature has endowed with extraordinary qualifications! She takes pleasure in giving to some men all the capacity necessary to make progress in the sciences, and it is the duty of princes to reward their labors. Why does not glory make choice of me to crown your success? I should fear nothing but that the country here should not produce as many laurels as your works deserve. If fate does not favor me so far as to make me constantly happy in your company, I at least hope one day to see him whom I admire at a distance, and to assure you in person that I am, with all the esteem due to those who, following the light of truth, consecrate their works to the good of the public,

Your affectionate friend,

FREDERICK,

Prince Royal of Prussia.

M. DE VOLTAIRE'S ANSWER TO THE PRINCE ROYAL OF PRUSSIA.

PARIS, August 26, 1736.

Sir: I must be insensible if I was not highly pleased with the letter with which your royal highness honored me; my self-love received high satisfaction from it; but the love of humankind,

which always animated my heart, and which I will presume to say is my distinguishing characteristic, gave me a much purer delight when I saw that there is in the world a prince who thinks like a man, a philosophical prince born to make the human species happy.

Give me leave to tell you, that there is not a man living, who is not in duty bound to thank you for the care you take to improve by sound philosophy a soul by nature framed for government. Depend upon it, there never were any kings who really deserved the name of good, but those who, like you, began by endeavoring to acquire knowledge, to study human nature, to love truth, and to detest persecution and superstition. Any prince who thinks in this manner, may revive the golden age in his dominions. Why do so few kings seek such happiness? Your royal highness must be sensible that it is because most of them think more of royalty than of humanity; you observe the very reverse of this conduct. Depend upon it, if the hurry of business and the malice of men do not spoil so fine a character, you will be one day adored by your people, and beloved by the whole world; all those who deserve the name of philosophers will repair to your dominions; and as celebrated artists crowd to countries where their respective arts are encouraged, your throne will be surrounded by men who think.

The renowned Queen Christina quitted her dominions, in order to go in quest of the arts. Reign, my lord, and let the arts come in quest of you.

May you never be disgusted with the sciences on

account of the dissensions of learned men. You see, my lord, by what you have yourself informed me, that the learned are only men like courtiers themselves; they are sometimes as rapacious, as much addicted to intrigue; and all the difference between the plagues of the court and the plagues of the school, is, that the latter are more ridiculous. It is afflicting to humanity that those who call themselves the publishers of the divine commandments, the interpreters of the deity, in a word, the divines, should be more dangerous than all the rest; that some of them should be as troublesome to society, as confused in their ideas; and their souls are swelled with gall and pride, in proportion as they are void of ideas. Such men would disturb the peace of the whole earth for the sake of a sophism, and engage kings to assert, by sword and fire, the honor of an argument, in ferio or in barbara. Every thinking being who differs from them in opinion is branded as an atheist; and every king who does not favor their party is consigned to damnation. You are well aware, my lord, that the best way is to leave these pretended preceptors and real enemies of society to themselves. Their words, when overlooked and neglected, mix with the air like wind; but, if authority adds its weight to them, that wind acquires a strength which is sometimes able to shake the throne.

I see, my lord, with the joy of a heart inspired by zeal for the welfare of mankind, the great difference you make between those who peaceably investigate the truth, and those who war for words they do not understand. I perceive that the New-

tons, the Leibnitzes, the Bayles, and the Lockes, those souls so sublime and so humane, give yours its spiritual nourishment, and that you reject the pretended ailments of the others, which you would find poisoned, and void of substance.

I can not make sufficient acknowledgments to your highness for having sent me the little book concerning Mr. Wolf; his metaphysical ideas reflect an honor on the human understanding; they resemble flashes of lightning in the darkest night; nothing further can, in my opinion, be expected from metaphysics. It does not seem probable that the first principles of things will ever be thoroughly understood. The rats, who occupy a few holes in a great building, know not whether the building is eternal; who is the architect, nor why that architect has built; they exert themselves to the utmost to preserve their lives, to people their holes, and to evade the destructive animals who pursue them. We are the rats, and the divine architect who built this edifice of the universe has not, as I know, hitherto disclosed his scent to any of us. If any man may flatter himself with having guessed right, it is Mr. Wolf. Though we may sometimes combat his opinions, we must always esteem him: his philosophy is by no means pernicious. What can be more beautiful and more true than his axiom, that men ought to be just, even if they had the misfortune of being atheists?

You were so good, my lord, as to promise to send me "The Treatise On God, the Soul and the World." What a present this! How extraordinary a commerce! The heir to a monarchy, in his

palace, condescends to send instructions to a recluse! My lord, deign to make me this present; my great love for the truth renders me worthy of it; most princes fear to hear the truth, you undertake to teach it. With regard to the verses which you mention, you think as judiciously upon that as upon every other article; such verses as do not teach men new and interesting truths do not deserve to be read; you are sensible that nothing can be more contemptible than to pass away one's life in reducing to rhyme such trite, commonplace topics as do not deserve the name of thoughts. If anything can be lower than this, it is to be a satirist alone, and to write only in order to depreciate others. Such poets are in Parnassus what those doctors are in the schools who know nothing but words, and cabal against those who are acquainted with things.

If your royal highness has not been displeased with the "Henriade," I should thank that love of truth, that horror of faction, persecution, superstition, tyrants and rebels, which breathe through my poem. It is the work of a virtuous man, and should of consequence meet with a favorable reception from a philosophical prince.

You command me to send you my other works. I shall obey you, my lord: I shall submit them to your judgment; you will to me supply the place of the public. I will submit to you whatever I have advanced in philosophy; your information shall be my recompense; it is a recompense which few sovereigns have to give. I may depend upon

your secrecy; your virtue must equal your knowledge.

I should look upon it as a singular happiness to have it in my power to come and pay my court to your royal highness. Travellers go to Rome to see churches, pictures, and bas relievos. Such a prince as you is much more deserving of a traveller's attention; a prince of such merit is a much more uncommon sight. But friendship, which detains me in my present retreat, will not permit me to quit it. You appear to me to be more a man than a prince, and you will, without doubt, permit me, my lord, to prefer my friends even to kings.

In whatever corner of the world I end my life, be assured, my lord, I will always offer up my best wishes for you, that is, for the happiness of a whole nation. My soul will be always in the number of your subjects; your glory will be always dear to me. It shall be my constant prayer that you may always be like yourself, and that other kings may be like you. I am, with the profoundest respect,

Your royal highness's humble servant,

VOLTAIRE.

TO THE PRINCE ROYAL OF PRUSSIA.

CIREY, December 21, 1741.

Sun who in winter sad darts feeble fire,
Sun who art of this world believed the fire,
Inventor deemed of the poetic trade,
Though such sad verses every day are made:
Say, Sun, what rigorous destiny ordains,
That whilst so little of the year remains

You should so distant from famed Berlin roll,
Which lies toward the frozen northern pole?
There dwells the chief whose breast celestial fire,
In his climes wanting, ever does inspire;
The hero who a host undaunted led,
And conquered Neisse when from our climes you fled.
Your course why do you to the Antarctic steer?
Do negroes lovely to your eyes appear?
From that sad climate quickly back retire,
And like my hero yield celestial fire.

In terms like these, royal Sir, did I this morning address your brother, the sun, who is likewise the soul of a part of this world. I should have said a great deal more concerning your majesty if I had that talent for writing verse with ease, which I have lost, and which you possess. I have received some here which you composed at Neisse, with as much ease as you took the town. This little anecdote, together with the verses, which you were so kind as to send me immediately after the victory of Molwitz, will one day furnish extraordinary materials for history.

Louis XIV. took Franche-Comté in winter, but he fought no battle and composed no verses at the camp before Dole or Besançon. Those composed by your majesty at Neisse, resemble those which Solomon composed in all his glory, when, after having known all things by experience, he acknowledged that "all is vanity." It is true, the good man spoke thus in the midst of three hundred wives, and seven hundred concubines, and without having ever fought a battle or besieged a town. But, royal Sir, no offence to Solomon or you, or to

you and Solomon; there is certainly some reality in this world.

Silesia's regions to lay waste,
Then crowned with laurels home to haste,
To hear all bards your worth proclaim,
And consecrate the hero's fame;
The fair and brave each night to call
To opera, comedy, or ball;
Yourself to see both loved and feared,
Admired by all men, and revered,
Seated on glory's lap to know
The pleasures that from friendship flow;
A joy to those but rarely known
Who shine in fields or on the throne;
With taste to read the learned lays
Composed by bards of ancient days;
Sometimes to labor happy rhymes,
Which shall be read in latest times;
Such a life must your bliss secure,
And pleasure must be real, sure.

Your majesty has achieved many great things in a short time. I am positive there is not that person living who is employed in a greater variety of affairs; but with this active genius that comprehends so many things in its sphere, you will always preserve that superiority of genius which raises you above all your employments.

All I apprehend is, that you may at last conceive too great a contempt for mankind. Millions of animals with two feet and no feathers are removed to a vast distance from you, as well by the meanness of their understanding as of their condition. This thought has been beautifully expressed by Milton: "Amongst unequals no society."

There is another misfortune to be dreaded, and that is that, as your majesty so admirably delineates the noble courage of politicians, the interested attachment of courtiers, etc., you may at last distrust all demonstrations of affection whatever, and look upon it as a self-evident proposition that no king is loved for his own sake. Let me in my turn, Sir, offer an argument of my own. Is it not true that no man can avoid loving, for his own sake, a person of a superior genius, who has a variety of talents, and to those talents joins the art of pleasing? Now if by ill luck this superior genius should happen to be a king, should his condition for that reason be the worse, and would he be the less beloved because of his wearing a crown? For my part, I do not find that the last circumstance inspires me with any coldness.

I am, Sir, etc.,

THE PRINCE ROYAL OF PRUSSIA TO M. DE VOLTAIRE.

Selowitz, March 23, 1742.

Dear Voltaire: I am afraid to write to you, for I have no other news to tell you but such as you are quite indifferent about, or such as you abhor. If I were to tell you, for example, that the inhabitants of two different countries of Germany left their habitations in order to cut the throats of another people, of whose very name they were ignorant, and of whom they went in quest to a very remote country, and for no other reason than because their master had made an agreement with

another prince, and because they intended to join in order to cut the throat of a third, you would tell me that such people were fools and mad to second in that manner the caprice and barbarity of their master.

Were I to tell you that we are preparing, with great care and expense, to demolish certain walls raised at an immense outlay; that we reap where we have not sown, and are masters where no body is strong enough to resist us; you would cry out: "O barbarians, robbers, inhuman wretches! the unjust shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven," according to St. Matthew, xii:24.

Since I foresee what you would say to me upon these subjects, I shall talk to you no more about them; I shall content myself with informing you that a man whom you have heard spoken of under the name of the King of Prussia, hearing that the dominions of his ally the Emperor were ruined by the Queen of Hungary, flew to his assistance; that he joined his troops to those of the King of Poland, in order to make a diversion in Lower Austria; and that he has been so successful that he expects in a short time to engage the principal forces of the Queen of Hungary in order to serve his ally. This is generosity, you will say; this is heroism. Yet, dear Voltaire, this is exactly the same with the first picture; it may be compared to the same woman appearing in her night-cap when she divests herself of her charms, and afterward showing herself with her paint, her false teeth, and her trinkets. In how many different points of view may the same object be seen? How much do men's judgments vary!

Men condemn in the evening what they approved in the morning; the sun which pleased them at its rising displeases them when it sets; hence it is that reputations are established, that they sink, and that they are re-established; and yet we are weak enough to be solicitous about reputation during the whole course of our lives. How is it possible that men can be imposed upon by this false coin ever since it was first current? Etc.

THE KING OF PRUSSIA TO M. DE VOLTAIRE.

If all histories were written like that which you sent me, we would be better acquainted with the manners of all ages, and less imposed upon by historians. The longer I know you, the more I admire your abilities. No style can, in my opinion, be finer than that in which the History of Louis XIV. is written. I read every paragraph three or four times over, to such a degree do I admire it; every sentence is striking, it everywhere abounds with admirable reflections; there is not a false thought in it; there is nothing in it in anyway puerile and its impartiality is unexceptionable. When I have read the work through, I shall send you a few remarks upon it, among the rest, upon the German names which you have a little disfigured. This might render the work somewhat obscure, as some of them are so disguised that we are puzzled to guess at them.

I wish every work capable of conveying instruc-

tion was to come from your pen. We should then be sure of being improved by the books we read.

TO CARDINAL QUIRINI.

BERLIN, December 12, 1751.

The temple would you have me sing,
To which you various offerings bring?
But yet though I your worth admire,
I cannot do what you require.
How can I, on the banks of Spree,
Where Roman laws no more bear sway,
My voice before all mankind raise,
And utter forth a prelate's praise?
From Sion, distant and forlorn,
Like a good Catholic, I mourn.
My prince by heresy's infected,
Religion's not by him respected.
It fills my soul with poignant woe,
To think that in the shades below
He shall, with ancients, have his place,
Ancients who were quite void of grace;
We know those heroes, thrice renowned,
Are punished in the abyss profound;
With them he must be damned, because
He in this world lived by their laws.
But still I'm much more grieved to find
A shocking vice infects his mind;
A vice, by men called toleration,
Which bears the opinions of each nation:
I'm shocked to think the Turkish crew,
The Quaker and the Lutheran too,
The Protestant and Papist find
Alike, with him, reception kind,
If they can by their actions claim
Of honest men the glorious name.
But, crime more shocking to reveal,

He laughs at sanguinary zeal;
That hate which bigots fills with rage,
Which gentle pity can't assauge,
But which the Free-thinker, professed,
Profanely turns into a jest:
What can your Eminence then hope
From me, who don't revere the Pope?
From me, who am the chamberlain
Of a prince obdurate in sin?
You, whose predestinated front
Bears double marks of honor on't.
Whose scarlet hat, with laurels bound,
Shows you for poetry renowned;
Who Horace and St. Austin's lore,
With equal genius could explore,
Who equally dost know to rise
To Pindus top, and paradise,
Convert that genius; you can please,
And teach mankind with equal ease;
Of Jesus Christ, the grace divine,
Does often through your writings shine,
And in them often we admire
Both Homer's grace and Homer's fire.

TO THE MARQUIS OF ISSARTS, AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE AT THE COURT OF DRESDEN.

VERSAILLES, April 7, 1747.

Sir: The kind letter with which you favored me, gives me at once pleasure and regret; at the same time that it delights me, it makes me sensible of the loss I have sustained. I might have been present at the very moment when your Excellency signed the treaty by which France was made happy. I might have seen the court of Dresden, but I never

saw it. I was not born to be happy; but your happiness, Sir, you will own even to equal your merit. What you left at Versailles, is restored to you at Dresden; you have there met with a king beloved by his subjects.

One day you'll make us a report
Which king has the most brilliant court,
Whether Louis or Augustus' name
To glory has the better claim.
A point like this might well confound
Sagacity the most profound,
You'll find e'en ten years' labor vain
This difficulty to explain.

Nothing can better prove how hard a matter it is to discover truth in this world; and then, Sir, those who know it best are the last to divulge it. For example, can those who have had the honor of being admitted to the presence of the three princesses with whom the Queen of Poland has blessed France, Naples, and Munich ever determine which of the three nations is happiest?

Should we even of the queen inquire
Which daughter we should most admire;
Which of the three does most excel,
She'd sure be much perplexed to tell:
But if you should of me inquire
Which gratitude should most inspire,
Which the most hope should entertain,
In doubt I should not long remain.

When I see the Dauphin and Dauphiness, I think of Psyche, and recollect that Psyche had two sisters:

Both filled the gazers with delight,
The Courts of both alike were bright;
Both were with tender spouses wedded,
But Psyche was with Cupid bedded.

But perhaps, Sir, an end might be put to this dispute, and Paris would, upon such an occasion, cut his apple into three pieces.

The prize of beauty should adorn
Her to whom first a daughter's born,
In whom we shall with transport trace
The beauty of her royal race.

You see, Sir, that, though I am not a politician, I can contrive means to accommodate matters, and I do not doubt but you will approve of my sentiments.

I have the honor of being, with the utmost respect,

Your Excellency's most humble servant.

TO CARDINAL DU BOIS[1]

CAMBRAY, July, 1722.

Rupelmonde for her charms renowned,
With whom I rove the world around,
Whom the young loves in crowds attend,
To whose commands all mortals bend,
Desires I'd write to you; my muse
Can nothing to the fair refuse.
By hopes to please her I'm excited,
And with the given talk delighted.

[1] This epistle was written in 1722. It has been printed several times, but never before from the original. Madame de Rupelmonde was a daughter of Marshal D'Alegre, wife of a Flemish nobleman, and mother of the Marquis of Rupelmonde, who was killed in Bavaria.

We have just arrived at your eminence's metropolis, which, I think, all the ambassadors and all the cooks in Europe have chosen as their place of rendezvous. The German ambassadors seem to have nothing to do at Cambray but drink the emperor's health. As for the ambassadors of Spain, one hears two masses a day, and the other superintends the company of comedians. The English ministers send several couriers to Champagne, and very few to London. Nobody expects to see your eminence; it is not apprehended that you will quit your royal palace in order to visit your pulpit. It would be a great mortification to us, as well as to you, if you were obliged to quit the ministry in order to turn apostle.

May gentlemen of deep design,
Who at the congress drink good wine,
Find means upon foundation sure,
The peace of Europe to secure,
May you your city love, but ne'er
Think it worth while to visit there.
I know you homilies can make,
In hand the bishop's crosier take,
Can mass upon occasion say,
And in a voice sonorous pray.
Rather teach princes how to shine,
Prudence with lively wit combine;
Let Europe's general voice proclaim
Your mighty deeds, resound your fame;
Blessed by all virtuous Frenchmen live,
Do not at Cambray blessings give.

Sometimes, my lord, remember a man who regrets nothing so much as not having it in his power to converse with your eminence as often as he could

wish, and who considers the honor of your company as the greatest favor you can confer on him.

CARDINAL DE FLEURY TO M. DE VOLTAIRE.

Issi, November 14, 1740.

Sir: I have just received your second letter, and answer it without losing a moment, for fear the Marquis of Beauvau should have quitted Berlin. I cannot but approve of your journey thither; and you are attached to the King of Prussia by ties so just and so strong, that you cannot refuse him this mark of your respect and gratitude. The Queen of Sheba's motive alone would have been sufficient to induce you to agree to it.

I did not know that the valuable present of "Anti-Machiavel," which was made me by the Marchioness of Châtelet, came from you; it is the more dear to me upon that account, and I return you my hearty thanks. As I have little leisure to bestow upon my amusements, I have not hitherto been able to read above forty pages of it, and I shall endeavor to read it through in this place, which I improperly call my retreat, as there is too much perplexity and trouble in it to allow me much repose.

Whoever be the author of this work, if he is not a prince, he deserves to be one, and the small part of it which I have read is so wise, so reasonable, and contains such admirable principles, that he who composed it would deserve to govern all other men, if he had the courage to carry them into execution; if he was born a prince, he enters into a solemn

engagement with the public. The Emperor Antoninus would never have acquired that immortal glory which he will preserve forever, if he had not by the justice of his government enforced the admirable system of morality, of which he had given such instructive lessons to all sovereigns.

You say so many obliging things of me, that I am afraid I should not give credit to them all; but they give me, however, high satisfaction, as they are at least tokens of your friendship. I should be greatly pleased if the King of Prussia could find in my conduct any conformity to his principles; for I assure you, I look upon them as the model of the most perfect and most glorious government.

I, unknown to myself, deviate into political reflections, and shall conclude, by assuring you that I will do my utmost to deserve the good opinion which his Prussian majesty has of me. The quality of prince, is in him superfluous; if he was only a private individual, everybody would think it an honor to be connected with him. I envy you that happiness, sir, and felicitate you upon it the more, as you are indebted for it only to your talents and your virtues.

M. DE VOLTAIRE'S ANSWER TO CARDINAL DE FLEURY.

BERLIN, November 26, 1740.

My Lord: I received your letter of the fourteenth, which was conveyed to me by the Marquis of Beauvau. I have obeyed the orders which your eminence did not think proper to give me in ex-

press terms. I have shown your letter to the King of Prussia; he is the more sensible of your praises, as he deserves them, and he appears to me disposed to deserve those of all the nations of Europe. It were to be wished, for their happiness, or at least for that of a great part of them, that the King of France and the King of Prussia were friends. This concerns you; my business is to offer up my best wishes, and be always devoted to you with the most profound respect.

CARDINAL ALBERONI TO M. DE VOLTAIRE.

ROME, February 10, 1735.

Sir: It was long before your life of the late King of Sweden came to my knowledge, which obliged me to defer returning you my thanks for that part of it which concerned me. Your prepossession in my favor has carried you a great way, since you have in your sublime style said more of me in two words, than Pliny has said of Trajan in his whole panegyric. Happy the princes who can find means to interest you in their exploits, your pen insures their immortality. With regard to myself, I assure you of the warmest sentiments of gratitude, and that no one living loves, esteems and honors you more than Cardinal Alberoni.

M. DE VOLTAIRE'S ANSWER.

My Lord: The letter with which your eminence has honored me is as acceptable a record of my

works as the esteem of Europe can be of your actions. I was not entitled to your thanks, my lord; I was only the organ of the public when I spoke of you. Liberty and truth, which have always guided my pen, secured me your suffrage. Those two characters are sure to please such a genius as yours. Whoever does not love them, may become a powerful, but can never be a great, man; I should be glad to have an opportunity of admiring from a nearer viewpoint him to whom I have done justice at a distance. I do not flatter myself that I shall ever be so happy as to see your eminence. But if Rome understands her interests enough even to desire to re-establish arts and commerce, and restore splendor to a country which was once mistress of the world, I hope I shall then write to you by a different title from that of your eminence, of whom I have the honor to subscribe myself with the most profound respect.

BUSINESS LETTERS.

In the correspondence between Voltaire and Abbé Moussinot we see the leading dramatic writer of his period as the sagacious man of affairs, interested in every detail affecting his position as capitalist, scientific investigator, and country gentleman. The abbé was the business man of the local clerics, with a shrewd judgment in financial matters and an eye to the main chance in picture-buying. He acted for Voltaire during eight years, with mutual satisfaction. The first letter, dated March, 1736, sets forth their relations:

"My Dear Abbé: I love your strong-box a thousand times better than that of a notary; there is no one in the world whom I trust as I do you; you are as intelligent as you are virtuous. You were made to be the solicitor-general of the order of the Jansenists, for you know that they call their union 'the Order'; it is their cant; every community, every society, has its cant. Consider, then, if you are willing to take charge of the funds of a man who is not devout, and to do from friendship for that undevout man what you do for your chapter as a duty. You will be able in this way to make some good bargains in buying pictures; you will borrow from me some of the money in your strong-box. My affairs, as you know, are very easy and very simple; you will be my superintendent wherever I may be myself; you will speak for me, and in your own name, to the Villars, to

the Richelieus, to the d'Estaings, to the Guises, to the Guébriants, to the d'Auneuils, to the Lézeaux, and to other illustrious debtors of your friend. When a man speaks for his friend he asks justice; when it is I who solicit that justice, I have the air of asking a favor, and it is this that I wish to avoid. This is not all: you will act as my plenipotentiary, whether for my pensions payable by M. Paris-Duverney, by M. Tannevot, first clerk of the finances, or for the interest due me from the Hôtel-de-Ville, from Arouet, my brother, as well as for the bonds and money which I have at different notaries. You will have, my dear abbé, carte-blanche for all that which concerns me, and everything will be conducted in the greatest secrecy. Write me word if this charge is agreeable to you. Meanwhile, I pray you to send your frotteur to find a young man named Baculard d'Arnaud: he is a student in philosophy at the College of Harcourt; he lives in the Rue Mouffetard. Give him, I beg you, this little manuscript (the 'Epistle upon Calumny'), and make him from me a little present of twelve francs. I entreat you not to neglect this small favor which I ask you; this manuscript will be sold for his advantage. I embrace you with all my heart; love me always, and, especially, let us bind the bonds of our friendship closer by mutual confidence and reciprocal services."

Again in May he writes: "To punish you, my dear friend, for not having sent to find the young Baculard d'Arnaud, student in philosophy at the College of Harcourt, and living with M. Delacroix, Rue Mouffetard—to punish you, I say, for not

having given him the 'Epistle upon Calumny' and twelve francs, I condemn you to give him a louis d'or, and to exhort him from me to learn to write, which will contribute to his fortune. This is a little work of charity which, whether Christian or mundane, must not be neglected. . . . . I expect news from you with impatience, and I embrace you with all my heart. I write to this young d'Arnaud. Instead of twenty-four francs, give him thirty livres when he comes to see you. I am going to seal my letter quick for fear that I augment the sum. Received thirty livres. Signed, Baculard d'Arnaud."

Here is a "Henriade" item: "Thirty-five thousand francs for tapestries of the 'Henriade'! That is much, my dear treasurer. It would be necessary, before all, to know how much the tapestry of Don Quixote sold for; it would be necessary, especially before commencing that M. de Richelieu should pay me my fifty thousand francs. Let us suspend, then, every project of tapestry, and let M. Oudri do nothing without more ample information. Buy for me, my dear abbé, a little table which may serve at once as screen and writing-desk, and send it in my name to the house of Madame de Winterfield, Rue Plâtrière. Still another pleasure. There is a Chevalier de Mouhi, who lives at the Hotel Dauphin, Rue des Orties; this chevalier wishes to borrow of me a hundred pistoles, and I am very willing to lend them to him. Whether he comes to your house, or whether you go to his, I pray you to say to him that I take pleasure in obliging literary men when I can, but that I am actually very much embarrassed in my affairs; that nevertheless

you will do all you can to find this money, and that you hope the reimbursement will be secured in such a way that there will be nothing to risk; after which you will have the goodness to inform me who this chevalier is, as well as the result of these preliminaries. Eighteen francs to the little d'Arnaud. Tell him I am sick and cannot write. Pardon all these trifles. I am a very tedious dabbler, but I love you with all my heart."

Voltaire always drew a line between the legitimately expensive and the extravagant. See the shrewd mot on buying in the letter of November, 1737:

"Oudri, my dear abbé, appears to me expensive; but if he makes two sets of hangings, can we not have them a little cheaper? I might be able even to have three of them made. If M. de Richelieu pays me, it will be well for me to invest my money in that way. The countenance of Henry IV. and that of Gabrielle d'Estrées in tapestry will succeed very well. Good Frenchmen will wish to have some Gabrielles and Henrys, especially if the good Frenchmen are rich. We are not very rich ourselves just now; but the holy time of Christmas will give us, I hope, some consolation. Cannot Chevalier come to Cirey to execute under my own eyes designs from the 'Henriade'? Does he know enough of his art for that? They speak well of him, but he has not yet sufficient reputation to be unteachable. It is said there is at Paris a man who draws portraits to be worn in rings in a perfect manner. I have seen a face of Louis XV. of his doing, which was an excellent likeness. Have the

goodness, my dear abbé, to disinter this man. You will find it impertinent that the same hand should paint the king and poor me; but friendship wishes it, and I obey friendship. The Chevalier de Mouhi, then, will send twice a week to Cirey the gossip of Paris. Enjoin it upon him to be infinitely secret; give him a hundred crowns, and promise him a payment once a month, or every three months, as he prefers. I treat you, my dear friend, as I beg you will treat me. I should be glad to be so happy as to receive some orders from you."

In October he writes: "I could wish, my dear and faithful treasurer, to have, under the greatest secrecy, some ready money deposited with a discreet and faithful notary, which he could place at interest for a time, and which, if necessary, I could get back without delay. The sum would be fifty thousand francs, and perhaps more. Are you not acquainted with a notary in whom you could confide? The whole would be in your name. I am very much discontented with M. Perret; he has two excellent qualities for a public man, he is brutal and indiscreet. . . . Have the goodness to give another louis d'or to d'Arnaud. Tell him then to have himself called simply d'Arnaud; that is a fine Jansenist name; Baculard is ridiculous."

Voltaire had perfect confidence in the abbé's discretion. "I find myself, my dear treasurer, in the situation of always having before me a large sum of money to dispose of. Your letters will be henceforth addressed to Madame d'Azilli, at Cirey. Put nothing in them too clearly which might re-

veal that it is I to whom you write. I find my obscurity convenient. I wish to have no correspondence with any one; I pretend to be ignored of all the world except you, whom I love with all my heart, and whom I beg very earnestly to find me a literary correspondent who will give me news with exactness, and whom you will leave in ignorance of my retreat."

"The principal of the debt of M. de Richelieu is 46,417 livres; date, May 5, 1735."

This bears date March, 1737. "I am very glad, my dear correspondent, that M. Berger thinks I am in England. I am there for all the world except you. Send, I pray you, a hundred louis d'or to M. the Marquis du Châtelet, who will bring them to me. Now, my dear abbé, are you willing that I should speak to you frankly? It is necessary for you to do me the favor of accepting every year a little honorarium, merely as a mark of my friendship. Let us not beat about the bush. You have a small salary from your canons; treat me as a chapter; take twice as much every year from your friend, the poet-philosopher, as your cloister gives you; this without prejudice to the gratitude which I shall always cherish. Arrange this and love me."

Later: "I repeat to you, my tender friend, my urgent request not to speak of my affairs to any one, and especially to say that I am in England. I have the very strongest reasons for that. In the present critical situation of my affairs, it would be very imprudent for me to embark in the commerce with Pinega a large sum, which would be too long in yielding returns. Therefore, let us not invest

in that commerce more than four or five thousand francs for our amusement; a like sum in pictures, which will amuse you still more. The paper of the farmers-general brings in six per cent. a year; it is the surest investment of money. Amuse yourself again in that. Buy some bonds. That merchandise will fall in a short time; at least, I think so; that is another honest recreation for a canon; and I leave to your intelligence everything that relates to those amusements. Besides, let us put into the hands of M. Michel, whose probity and fortune you know, one-half of our ready money at five per cent., and not more; were it only for six months, that would produce something. In the matter of interest nothing must be neglected, and in investing our money we must always conform to the law of the prince. Let all that, like my other affairs, be a profound secret. Still eighteen francs to d'Arnaud, and two 'Henriades.' I see that I give you more trouble than all your chapter, but I shall not be so ungrateful."

"M. the Abbé de Breteuil has come here. He is in quest of some engravings for his rooms; if I have still half a dozen pretty enough, you will do me, my dear friend, the favor to send them. You will have the goodness to send with them a word or two, in the way of a note, to the effect that, having recommended that the engravings of mine which are left should be presented to him, you have but these, and he is requested to accept them. Besides the two thousand four hundred francs which you are to give to the Marquis du Châtelet, it is necessary to give him fifty livres. It

is necessary also, my dear abbé, to find a man who will give us at Cirey twice a week a letter of news. I ask a thousand pardons, my generous correspondent, for the tiresome details of my commissions, but you must have pity upon country people, by whom you are tenderly loved."

Certain affairs have gone wrong. Writing in May, Voltaire shows his capacity for business. "You are going, then, to Rouen, my dear treasurer? See, I pray you, the Marquis de Lézeau. Speak to him of the poverty of our cash box. I am confident that you will induce him to pay; you have the gift of persuasion. It is, my dear abbé, of absolute necessity that I should know how it is that I have forgotten having given a receipt to M. the President d'Auneuil. It must be some one else who has given this receipt, and who has received the money for me; it is from the mouth of Demoulin that you can know whether this money has been received or not. Mesnil, the notary, delivered it; Demoulin ought to have received it. This man, who robbed me of twenty thousand francs, and who is an ingrate, could he have pilfered also that half year's payment? It is necessary to address ourselves to those two individuals in order to know the truth; and if neither of them remember the facts it will be well that M. d'Auneuil should be informed that I know no more of the matter than they. In matters of interest and money we cannot be too careful and exact; we should foresee everything and guard against everything. M. de Richelieu owes only for one year; it is not proper to demand that year's interest at a time

when he is paying me forty-three thousand two hundred francs. I would not hinder him, however, from giving me some ready money, if he wishes to do so; but I shall be very content with a good assignment, as well for the two thousand nine hundred livres of arrears which I am still to receive from him as for the annuity of four thousand francs which he pays me every year. In that case he would be importuned no more, and our affairs would be more according to rule and easier to manage. You can, my dear abbé, send by the coach, in perfect safety, three hundred louis well packed, without saying what they are and without expense, provided the box be well and duly registered as containing valuables; that will suffice. Besides these three hundred louis, I must have a draft for two thousand four hundred francs; the receiver-general of Champagne will give you this draft for your money. Any banker will tell you the name and residence of the receiver-general. I am ashamed of all the trouble I give you, and I am obliged to avow, my dear friend, that you were made to manage greater affairs than the treasury of a chapter of Saint Merri and the revenue of a philosopher who embraces you with all his heart. In this world one is rarely what he ought to be."

The poet-philosopher becomes an employer of expert labor. "This man who has the secret of spinning brass is not the only one; but I believe that only a little of it can be spun, and that it easily breaks. Sound this man of brass; we might be able to have him here, and give him a chamber, a laboratory, his board, and a salary of a hundred

crowns. It would be in his power to make some experiments, and to try and make steel, which assuredly is much easier than to make gold. If he has the misfortune to seek the philosopher's stone, I am not surprised that from six thousand francs a year he is reduced to nothing. A philosopher who has six thousand francs a year has the philosopher's stone. That stone brings us, very naturally, to speak of affairs of interest. Here is the certificate which you ask for. I repeat to you my prayers that M. de Guise, M. de Lézeau, and others may be written to without delay; that you see M. Paris-Duverney, and let him know that he will give me great pleasure if he permits me to enjoy the pension from the queen and from the royal treasury, of which I am in very great need, and for which I shall be much obliged. Be willing also, my dear abbé, to arrange, in some amiable way, my annuity, my capital overdue, and the arrears, with the steward of M. de Richelieu; the whole without betraying an unbecoming distrust. That should have been done more than a month ago. An assurance of regular payment would spare the duke disagreeable details, would deliver his steward from great embarrassment, would spare you, my dear friend, many useless steps, many fatiguing and unfruitful labors. We shall say more of this another time, for I am afraid of forgetting to ask you for a very good air-pump, which is hard to find; a good reflecting telescope, which is at least as rare; the volumes of pieces which have been crowned at the Academy. Such are the learned things which my little learned mind has very urgent

need of. I have, my dear abbé, neither the time nor the strength to continue, nor even to thank you for the chemist whom you sent me. As yet, I have scarcely seen him, except at mass; he loves solitude; he ought to be content. I shall not be able to work with him in chemical matters until an apartment which I am building is finished; till then we must each of us study apart, and you must love me always."

"It is necessary, my dear friend, to ask, to ask again, to press, to see, to importune, and not persecute my debtors for my annuities and arrears. A letter costs nothing; two are only a very trifling embarrassment, and serve the purpose that a debtor cannot complain if I am obliged to avail myself of legal means of redress. After two letters to the farmers at an interval of a month, and a little word of excuse to the masters, it will be necessary to issue formal demands to the farmers of the lands upon which my annuities are secured. I will send you the list of them. For the rest of my life it will be with the farmers that I shall have to do. That will be a much better plan. Pinga says everywhere that he is selling my effects, and that has a much worse effect than all I sell. I flatter myself, my dear friend, that you will keep much better the secret of all my affairs. You have, God be thanked, all the good qualities."

"Great thanks, my dear abbé, for the present given to La Mare, and the more because it is the last which my affairs permit me to accord him. If ever he comes to importune you, do not let him take up your time. Reply that you have noth-

ing to do with my business; that cuts the matter short. Ascertain if it is true that this little gentleman, whom I have overwhelmed with benefits, rails also against me. Speak to Demoulin gently. He should indeed blush at his conduct toward me; he has deprived me of twenty thousand francs, and wishes to dishonor me. In losing twenty thousand francs I need not acquire an enemy. Another request, my dear abbé. A friend, who asks of me an inviolable secrecy, charges me to ascertain what is the subject of the prize essay announced this year by the Academy of Sciences. I know no man more secret than you: it will be you, then, my dear friend, who will render us this service. If I were to write to some member of the Academy, he would think, perhaps, that I wished to compete for the prize; that would suit neither my age nor my defective knowledge."

Here we have the experimental philosopher in his laboratory. "Arm yourself with courage, my dear and amiable agent, for to-day I am going to be exceedingly troublesome. Here is a learned negotiation, in which it is necessary, if you please, that you succeed, and that I be not found out. A visit to M. de Fontenelle, and a long explanation upon what is understood by the propagation of fire. Disputants, among whom I sometimes take a fancy to thrust myself, discuss the question whether fire has or has not weight. M. Lémeri, whose 'Chemistry' you sent me, asserts that, after having calcined twenty pounds of lead, he found it increased in weight five pounds; he does not say whether he weighed the earthen vessel in which

the calcination was made, to ascertain if any carbon had joined itself to the lead; he supposes simply, or rather boldly, that the lead has absorbed some particles of fire, which have augmented its weight. Five pounds of fire! Five pounds of light! That is admirable, and so admirable that I do not believe it. Other scientific men have made experiments with a view to ascertain the weight of fire. They have put filings of copper and filings of tin into glass retorts hermetically sealed; they have calcined these filings, and they have found them increased in weight: an ounce of copper has acquired forty-nine grains, and an ounce of tin four grains. Antimony calcined by the rays of the sun, by means of the burning-glass, has also increased in weight in the hands of the chemist, Homberg. I wish that all those statements may be true; I wish that the matter in which the metals were held during calcination may not have contributed to increase the weight of those metals; but I who speak to you have weighed more than a thousand pounds of red-hot iron, and I have afterward weighed it cold. I have not found a grain of difference. Now it would be very curious that twenty pounds of lead, calcined, should gain five pounds in weight, and that a thousand pounds of red-hot iron should not weigh one grain the heavier. Such, my dear abbé, are the difficulties which for a month past have wearied the head of your friend, little accustomed to physical investigations, and rendered him uncertain in chemistry, just as other difficulties of a different order render him shaky upon some points little important of scholastic theology. In

every science we seek the truth in good faith, and when we think we have found it, we are often embracing only an error. Now for the favor which I ask of you. Go to your neighbor, M. Geoffroy, apothecary to the Academy of Sciences; get into conversation with him by means of half a pound of quinquina, which you will buy and send to me. Ask him respecting the experiments of Lémeri, of Homberg, and mine. You are a very skilful negotiator; you will easily find out what M. Geoffroy thinks of all that, and you will tell me what he says—the whole without committing me. I am, as you see, my dear friend, much occupied with physical matters; but I do not forget that superfluity which they name the necessary. I hope that Hébert will not delay to finish it, and that he will spare nothing in rendering it elegant and magnificent."

A month later: "Are you willing, my dear friend, to pay a visit, long or short as you like, to M. Boulduc, a learned chemist? I am informed that he has made some experiments which tend to prove that fire does not augment the weight of bodies! The point is to have a conversation with him on that subject. There is also a M. Grosse, who lives in the same building. He is also a chemist, very intelligent and very laborious. I pray you to ask both of these gentlemen what they think of the experiments of the lead calcined by ordinary fire, and of the metals calcined by the rays of the sun concentrated through the burning-glass. They will feel it a pleasure to speak to you, to instruct you, and you will send me a statement of their

philosophic instructions. This, my dear correspondent, is a commision much more amusing than to arrange a composition with the creditors of the Prince de Guise. That prince has always concealed from me the appointment of a commission for the liquidation of his debts. A life annuity ought to be sacred; he owes me three years' income. A commission established by the king is not established for the purpose of frustrating the creditors. Life annuities ought certainly to be expected from the operation of the laws most favorable to debtors of dishonest intentions. Speak of this, I pray you, to M. de Machault; and after having represented to him my right and the injury which I suffer, you will act as he will direct. It is essential for us to avail ourselves of legal methods, and it is proper to do so with all the consideration possible. Do not trust the positive promise of the Prince de Guise. The positive promises of princes are trifles, and his are worse."

Once more, next day's postscript, June 30. "Another little visit, my dear friend, to M. Geoffroy. Send him back, by means of some ounces of quinquina, or of senna, or of manna, or of anything else which you may be pleased to buy for your own health or for mine—send him back, I tell you, to the chapter of lead and the regulus of antimony increased in weight by calcination. He has told you, and it is true, that those substances lose the increase of weight after becoming cold again; but that is not enough. It is necessary to know if that weight is lost when the calcined body becomes simply cold again, or if it is lost when the calcined

body has been afterward melted. Lémeri, who reports that twenty pounds of calcined lead weigh twenty-five pounds, adds that this lead remelted only weighs nineteen pounds. MM. Duclos and Homberg report that the regulus of iron and that of antimony calcined by the burning-glass increased in weight; but that upon being melted afterward by the same glass they lost both the weight which they had acquired and a little of their own. It is then not after having become cold that these bodies lose the weight added to their substance by the action of the fire. It would be necessary also to know if M. Geoffroy thinks that the igneous matter alone has caused this increase of weight; if the iron ladle with which they stirred during the operation, or if the vessel which contained the metal, did not increase the weight of that metal by transfusing into it some of its own substance. Ascertain, my dear friend, the opinion of the apothecary upon all these points, and send it to me quickly. You are very capable of making this chemist talk, and all the chemists of the Academy, and of understanding them well. I count upon your friendship and discretion."

Note the admirable tact of these instructions on rather dry business. "It is a pleasure, my dear friend, to give you learned commissions, so well do you acquit yourself of them. No one could render service better or more promptly. I have just performed the experiment upon iron which the learned charcoal-burner, M. Grosse, advises. I weighed a piece of two pounds, which I made red-hot upon a tile in the open air. I weighed it red, I

weighed it cold; it always weighed the same. I have been weighing every day lately, iron and melted iron, flaming hot; I have weighed from two pounds to a thousand. So far from finding the weight of red-hot iron greater, I have found it much smaller, which I attribute to the furnace, prodigiously hot, which consumed some particles of iron. It is this which I pray you to communicate to M. Grosse when you see him; visit, then, promptly this gnome, and, with your usual precaution, consult him anew. He is a man well informed upon these subjects. Ascertain, then: 1, if he believes that fire has weight; 2, if the experiments made by M. Homberg and others ought to prevail over that of the iron red and iron cooled, which always weigh the same. We are surrounded, my dear abbé, with uncertainties of all possible kinds. The least truth gives us infinite pains to discover. 3. Ask him if the burning-glass of the Palais-Royal has the same effect upon matter exposed to the air as in the vacuum of the air-pump. Upon this point you must make him talk a long time. Ask him the effect of the rays of the sun in that vacuum upon gunpowder, upon iron, upon liquors, upon metals, and make a little note of all the answers of this learned man. 4. Ask him if the phosphorus of Boyle, the burning phosphorus, takes fire in a vacuum. Finally, ask if he has seen any good Persian naphtha, and if it is true that this naphtha burns in water. There you are, my dear abbé, a finished natural philosopher. I pester you terribly, for I still add that I am in a hurry for this information. I abuse your complaisance ex-

cessively, but in atonement I love you excessively."

Again; "Every day, my dear friend, brings you, then, new importunity from me. Tell me, will it not be abusing your patience to pray you to see M. Grosse again, and to have with that celebrated chemist a new scientific conversation? See him, then, and have the goodness to ask that learned charcoal-burner if he has ever performed the experiment of plunging his thermometer in spirits of wine, in spirits of nitre, to see if the mercury rises in those liquors. I am, my dear abbé, always ashamed of my importunities; but spare neither carriages nor messengers, and always transact the affairs of your friend entirely at your ease."

October brings a change to finance. "Is M. de Brézé quite solid? What do you think of it, my prudent friend? This article of interest having been maturely examined, take twenty thousand francs from M. Michel and give them to M. Brézé, at ten per cent. This investment will be the more agreeable, as we shall be paid easily and regularly upon the proceeds of his houses in Paris. Arrange this affair for the best; and, once arranged, if the estate of Spoix can be bought for fifty thousand francs, we shall find the money toward the month of April. We shall sell some bonds. We shall borrow at five per cent., which will not be difficult either to you or to me. Life is short; Solomon tells us we must enjoy it; I think to enjoy, and for that reason I feel within me a grand vocation to be gardener, plowman, and vine-dresser. Perhaps even I shall succeed better in planting trees, in digging the earth, and in making it fruitful than in composing

tragedies, experimenting in chemistry, writing epic poems, and other sublime follies which make implacable foes. Give 'L'Enfant Prodigue' (*The Prodigal*) to Prault for fifty louis d'or—six hundred francs down, and a note for the other six hundred francs, payable when this unhappy *Enfant* shall see the light. This money will be employed in some good work. I do not rebel against my destiny, which is to have a little glory and some hisses."

Here is a letter which, as to style, none but Voltaire could have written. It is dated November, 1737. "Your patience, my dear abbé, is going to be put to a severe proof; I tremble lest you may be unable to sustain it. I hope everything from your friendship. Affairs temporal, affairs spiritual, these are the two great subjects of the long babble with which I am about to trouble you. M. de Lézeau owes me three years; it is necessary to press him without too much importunity. A letter to the Prince de Guise; that costs nothing, and advances matters. The Villars and the d'Auneuils owe two years; it is necessary politely and nicely to remonstrate with those gentlemen touching their duties to their creditors. It is necessary also to finish with M. de Richelieu, and to consent to what he wishes. I should have some great objections to make upon what he proposes; but I love better a conclusion than an objection. Conclude, then, my dear friend; I trust myself blindly to your discretion, which is always very useful to me. Prault ought to give fifty francs to monsieur, your brother. I wish him to do so. It is a trifling *bonus,*

a bagatelle, which is part of my bargain; and when that bagatelle shall be paid, monsieur, your brother, will scold for me the negligent Prault, who in the parcels of books which I order always makes delays that try my patience cruelly; nothing that he sends me arrives at the time appointed. Monsieur, your brother, will then inquire of that book-seller, or of any other that he wishes, for a Puffendorf; for the chemistry of Boerhaave, the most complete edition; for a 'Letter upon the Divisibility of Matter,' published by Jomvert; for the 'Index of the Thirty-First Volume of the History of the Academy of Sciences'; for Marriotte upon the 'Nature of the Air'; the same author upon 'Cold and Heat'; for Boyle *'De Ratione inter Ignem et Flammam,'* difficult to find; that is the affair of monsieur, your brother. Other commissions: two reams of foolscap, the same of letter paper—the whole of Holland, twelve sticks of Spanish sealing-wax for spirits of wine; a Copernican sphere; a burning-glass of the largest size; my engravings of the Luxembourg; two globes mounted; two thermometers; two barometers (the longest are the best); two scales, well graduated; some crucibles; some retorts. In making purchases, my friend, always prefer the handsome and excellent, if a little dear, to a common article less costly.

"So much for the literary man who seeks to instruct himself after the Fontenelles, the Boyles, the Boerhaaves, and other learned men. What follows is for the material man, who digests very ill, who has need to take, as they tell him, plenty of exercise; and who beside this need, of necessity has also

some other needs of society. I pray you, in consequence, to buy for him a good fowling-piece; a pretty game-bag with appurtenances; a gun-hammer; a draw-charge; large diamond shoe-buckles; other diamond garter-buckles; twenty pounds of hair powder; ten pounds of smelling powder; a bottle of essence of jasmin; two enormous pots of orange pomatum; two powder puffs; a very good knife; three fine sponges; three dusters; four bundles of quills; two pairs of toilet pincers, very nice; a pair of very good pocket scissors; two floor brushes; finally, three pairs of slippers, well furred; and, besides—I remember nothing more. Of all these make a parcel; two, if necessary; three, even, if necessary: your packer is excellent. Send the whole by way of Joinville; not to my address, for I am in England—I beg you to remember that—but to the address of Madame de Champbonin. All that costs money, you will tell me; and where to get the money? Where you wish, my dear abbé. We have some bonds; we can convert them. We should never neglect anything for our pleasure, since life is short. I shall be entirely yours during that short life."

This December letter gives a glimpse of Voltaire's friendlier relations with the booksellers. "Instead of money which Prault owes me, my dear abbé, I have ordered some books of him. You tell me he is dissatisfied; I am surprised at it; he ought to know that an author never deprives himself of the right of foreign editions. As soon as a book is printed at Paris with privilege, the publishers of Holland seize it, and the first who prints it has the

exclusive privilege in that country; and to have this right of printing it first it suffices to announce the work in the gazettes. It is an established usage, which holds the place of law. Now, when I wish to favor a publisher in Holland, I advise him of the work which I am printing in France, and I endeavor to let him have the first copy, in order that he may get beforehand with the trade. I have then promised a Holland publisher that I will immediately send him a copy of the work in question, and I have promised him this little favor to indemnify him for the delay in finishing the elements of the philosophy of Newton, which he began to print nearly a year ago. The point is to hurry on Prault, in order at the same time to hasten the little advantage which will indemnify the Holland publisher, for whom I have an affection, and who is a very honest man. M. Prault knows very well that this is the point. His privilege is for France, and not for Holland. He has never done business except upon this footing, and on condition that the work should be printed at Paris and at Amsterdam simultaneously. To prevent all difficulty, send him this note, and let him put in it his reply. These are the facts, and I ask your pardon for this verbiage. Prault still owes fifty francs to monsieur, your brother; I wish him to pay them. This is a new bonus which I beg your brother to accept. I pray him also to send me the old tragedy of 'Cresphonte,' and all the old books which I have noted upon the catalogue which he sent me."

This letter, also of December, is dated as from England. "I am very glad, my dear natural phi-

losopher, that M. de Fontenelle has explained himself touching the propagation of fire. As the light of the sun is the most powerful fire we know, it was natural to have some ideas a little clear upon that elementary fire. It was the affair of a philosopher; the rest is a blacksmith's business. I am in the midst of forges, and the subject suits me well enough. I hope that Bronod will explain himself as clearly respecting the fifty louis of which you speak as M. de Fontenelle upon light. If Bronod does not pay this money, I believe it will be necessary to sell a bond. I see no great harm in that; one never loses his dividend. It is true that the price varies toward the time of their payment, that is to say, every six months; but that amounts to little; and, besides, it is better to sacrifice some pistoles than give you the trouble of calling again upon M. Bronod. The three louis which you gave finally to M. Robert were doubtless for the advances he has made. I cannot imagine that a solicitor has taken it into his head to incur expense for me, since I have had no law business, unless I have had a suit without knowing it. M. Michel wishes, then, to keep my money until the first of March? Be it so. Let him have it; it will be always two months' interest gained. Let us not disdain such pickings. Make, I pray you, if you think it necessary, a little present to the steward of M. de Richelieu; but before doing so we must have good security for my arrears, and security that henceforth I receive regularly four thousand francs a year. A louis d'or to d'Arnaud, without telling him either where I am or what I am doing; neither

him nor any one else. I am at Cirey for you alone, and in Cochin China for all the Parisians; or, which will be more probable, confined in some province of England."

Highly amusing is this on his own portrait, a face in every aspect as striking as his pen-work. "The picture of myself drawn in pastel, my dear abbé, is horrible and wretched, whatever the engraver thinks; little do I care. I shall not take the part of my countenance, which I do not know too well; but, my dear friend, can they not make me less ugly? I leave that to your care; especially, do not speak of it to Madame du Châtelet. Let us come to the affair of this lady. See, as soon as possible, Hébert, and recommend to him the greatest diligence. You have given him fifty louis; give him fifty more if he demands them, and assure him that at the instant of delivery the whole shall be exactly paid. If, in accordance with my last letter, you have sold a bond, you have done well; if you have not sold one, still you have done well. I approve you in everything, because all that you do is always well done, and you deserve that I thank you and that I embrace you heartily."

This bears date July, 1740. "I received your letter of the 9th, in which you inform me of the *general* bankruptcy of the Receiver-General named Michel. A sufficiently large portion of my property is involved—40,000 francs. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. To suffer my ills in patience has been my lot for forty years; and one can submit to Providence without being a devotee. I confess that I

did not expect this failure, and I do not understand how a receiver-general of the finances of his Most Christian Majesty, a very rich man, too, could fail so awkwardly, unless it is because he wished to be richer. In that case, M. Michel is doubly wrong. I could find it in my heart to cry:

Michel, au nom de l'Éternel,
Met jadis le diable en déroute;
Mais aprés cette banqueroute,
Que le diable emporte Michel.

In God's name, good St. Michael
Once made the devil flee;
But after this smash, Michael,
May the devil fly off with thee!

"But this would be a poor jest, and I do not wish to make light either of M. Michel's losses or of my own. Nevertheless, my dear abbé, you will find the result to be that M. Michel's children will remain very rich, very well placed. . . . Have the goodness to speak to Michel's cashier; endeavor to get from him how we should proceed so as not to lose all. . . . Good-night; I embrace you with all my soul. Console yourself for the rout of Michel; your friendship consoles me for my loss."

December, 1737: "You speak to me, my dear abbé, of a good chemist, and I hear you with pleasure. Then you propose that I should take him into my service; I ask nothing better. He will enjoy here complete liberty, be not ill lodged, be well nourished, have great convenience for cultivating at his ease his talent as a chemist; but it is indispensable that he should know how to say mass on Sundays and festivals in the chapel of the château.

This mass is a condition without which I could not engage him. I will give him a hundred crowns [*écus*] a year, but I can do nothing more. He must also be informed that we take our meals very rarely with the Marquise du Châtelet, whose meal-times are not very regular; but there is a table for the Count du Châtelet, her son, and his tutor, a man of understanding, served regularly at noon and at eight in the evening. M. du Châtelet, the elder, often eats at that table, and occasionally we all sup together. Besides, we enjoy here perfect liberty. For the present we can only give him a chamber with an antechamber. If he accepts my propositions, he can come and bring all his apparatus with him. If he is in need of money you can advance him a quarter, on condition that he starts at once. If he delays his departure, do not delay, my dear treasurer, to send me some money by the coach. Instead of two hundred and fifty louis, send boldly three hundred of them, with the books and the bagatelles I have asked for. For the rest, my dear friend, I take it for granted that your chemist is a man of sense, since you propose him. Tell me his name, for, really, I must know how he calls himself. If he makes Fahrenheit thermometers, he will make some here, and render service to natural philosophy. Are those thermometers of the same scale as Réaumur's? These instruments do not accord unless they sound the same octave."

Voltaire's "English Letters" appear in another volume. He quickly learned to speak and write the language with remarkable fluency. His first efforts were necessarily crude, and we may indulge a smile

at this early specimen of English composition without disrespect to the writer. The letter appears to have found its way into the columns of an English provincial paper in 1824, whence it was rescued in 1868 by *Notes and Queries*. It must have been written within a few months of his arrival in England, in May, 1726.

"Sir,—j wish you good health, a quick sale of y^r^ burgundy, much latin, and greeke to one of y^r^ children, much Law, much of cooke and littleton, to the other. quiet and joy to mistress brinsden, money to all. when you'll drink y^r^ burgundy with mr furneze, pray tell him j'll never forget his favours.

"But dear john be so kind as to let me know how does my lady Bollingbroke, as to my lord j left him so well j dont doubt he is so still. but j am very uneasie about my lady. If she might have as much health as she has spirit & witt, Sure she would be the Strongest body in england. Pray dear s^r^ write me Something of her, of my lord, and of you. direct y^r^ letter by the penny post at m^r^ Cavalier, Belitery square by the R Exchange. j am sincerely & heartily y^r^ most humble most obedient rambling friend

VOLTAIRE.

"john Brinsden, esq.
durham's yard
by charing cross."

How thoroughly Voltaire had mastered the English tongue is shown in these letters to his old friend and host, Sir Everard Falkener, of London, who had been appointed ambassador to the Sublime Porte:

Dated July 27, 1751: "Dear Sir: Fortune that hurries us to and fro in this transient world, attached you to a great prince, and carried me to the court of a great king. But, in these various tossings, my head will never prove giddy enough to forget your friendship. I hope you preserve some kindness for me, and I dare rely upon your good heart. I must tell you I have written a History of Louis XIV. You may presume it is written with truth, and not without liberty or freedom. I have been obliged to print it in Berlin at my own expense. I presume four or five hundred copies could sell off well in your country; the two things I have at heart, truth and liberty, being still dear to your countrymen, raise in me that expectation. I dare apply, my dear sir, to your kindness and friendship of old. You may perhaps recommend this business to some honest man, and even to a bookseller, who would be honest enough to merit your favor. I would direct the cargo to him, and he should take a reasonable salary for his trouble. If I can by your favor find any such man, I shall be most obliged to you. I hope you are a happy husband and a happy father, as you are a worthy Englishman."

This and the letters which follow appear to have had a good effect, as a subscription edition of Voltaire's works was duly announced. He strenuously objected to the publication without his revision.

Dated January 27, 1752: "My 'Louis XIV.' is on the Elbe, about a month ago. I don't know whether the grand monarch has yet put to sea, to invade Great Britain. But booksellers are greater

politicians than Louis; and I think it is very likely they have got the start of me, by sending my book to London by the way of Rotterdam, while my bale of printed tales is on the Elbe; and so they will reap all the benefit of my labors, according to the noble way of the world. My book is prohibited among my dear countrymen, because I have spoken the truth; and the delays of cargoes, and the jarring of winds, hinder it from pursuing its journey to England. So, I have to fight with, or against the sea, and earth, and hell, for booksellers are the hell of writers. Be what it will, receive, my dear sir, my cargo of printed sheets, when wind and tide will permit. Do what you please with them; I am resigned. I had rather be read than be sold; truth is above trade, and reputation above money!"

March 27: "My dear and beneficent friend, I send to you, by the way of Hamburg, two enormous bales of the scribbling trade. I direct them to our envoy at Hamburg, who will dispatch them to you, and put my wares to sea, instead of throwing them into the fire; which might be the case in France, or at Rome. My dear friend, I have recourse to your free and generous soul. Some French, good patriots, who have read the book, raise a noble clamor against me, for having praised Marlborough and Eugene; and some good churchmen damn me for having turned a little into ridicule our *jansenisme* and *molinisme*. If our prejudiced people are fools, booksellers and printers or book-jobbers are rogues. I am like to be damned in France, and cheated by the Dutch; the old German honesty is gone. Booksellers of all religions

are the same. I shall lose all the fruits of my labors and expenses; but I rely on your kindness. You may cause some books to be bound, and choose an honest man, who will give them to the chief-readers of your nation. I entreat you to present His Royal Highness with one of these volumes, and to give some *exemplaires* or copies to those of your friends you will think fit. The bookseller you will choose may do what he pleases with the remainder, and sell them as best as he can, provided he sells them not before Easter; it is all I require of him."

The next is dated November 28: "I hope, my dear and worthy friend, my worthy Englishman, you have received my Lord Bolingbroke's vindication against priests, whom I have hated, hate, and I shall hate till doomsday. You will receive, my dear sir, in a very short time, as *exemplaire* of 'Louis XIV.,' a new edition, more accurate and correct a great deal, more copious and curious. I desire you would be so kind as to answer two letters which I wrote to you long ago. Let me not be altogether in the dark about the good or bad success of my book in England. Two editions of it have been published this year in Europe, and two new ones are just now come out. But your approbation would flatter me more than all that eagerness of the book-mongers. Tully relied more on the testimony of Cato than on the huzzas of the multitude. If you have any news of my book's fate, let me know something of it after a whole year. If you have given the volumes to a bookseller, be so good

as to tell me whether this bookseller has anything to remit to me, or not."

January 16, 1753: "I have reaped benefit enough, since I have pleased you, and not displeased your nation. I return you my most tender thanks. I hope to come over myself, in order to print my true works, and to be buried in the land of freedom. I require no subscription; I desire no benefit. If my works are neatly printed, and cheaply sold, I am satisfied."

February 1, 1754: "I have written to you already, and sent my letter to Sir Hanbury Williams, the British envoy at the court of Dresden. But I could not tell you enough about the desire I have to see England again before my death. I did inform you of my desire to print my works in London, without benefit, without subscription, and merely in order to give a true edition of the works of a Frenchman, who thinks like a Briton. I send this letter to Dresden. I must tell you, my dear sir, that I have taken the liberty to draw upon you for the ninety-four pounds. I return you again ninety-four thousand thanks."

Voltaire's commentaries on his plays will be found in the volumes containing the dramatic works and in various papers among the essays and short studies. These passages, from his letters to his friends, Cideville and Formont, in 1732, refer to the tragedy "Zaïre," on which he was then engaged:

"This play will be made for the heart, as much as *'Eriphile'* was for the imagination. The scene is to be laid in a very singular place, and the action will pass between Turks and Christians. I shall

depict their manners to the utmost of my ability, and I shall try to throw into the work all that the Christian religion has of most pathetic and most interesting, and all that love knows of most tender and cruel. Here is work for six months."

"Every one here reproaches me that I do not put more love into my pieces. There shall be love enough this time I swear to you, and not gallantry either. My desire is that there may be nothing so Turkish, so Christian, so amorous, so tender, so infuriate, as that which I am now putting into verse for the pleasure of the public. I have the honor already to have done an act of it. Either I am much deceived, or this will be the most peculiar piece we have upon our stage. The names of Montmorency, of Saint Louis, of Saladin, of Jesus, of Mahomet, will be in it. There will be mention of the Seine and of Jordan, of Paris and of Jerusalem. We shall love, we shall baptize, we shall kill, and I will send you the outline as soon as it is done . . . . Don't ask me for news of the parliament. I know, and wish to know, only *les belles-lettres.*"

June 25: "Hearty thanks, my dear friend, for the good advice you give me upon the plan of a tragedy; but it came too late. The tragedy was done. It cost me but twenty-two days. Never have I worked with such swiftness. The subject drew me on, and the piece made itself. . . . At present I am having it copied; as soon as I have a copy ready, it shall start for Rouen, and go to Messieurs de Formont and Cideville. Scarcely had I written the last verse of my Turco-Christian piece than I took up '*Eriphile*' again."

June 27: "A man just finishing a new tragedy has not time to write long letters, my amiable Cideville; but every scene of the piece was a letter which I wrote to you, and I said to myself continually, 'Will my tender and susceptible friend Cideville approve this situation or this sentiment? Shall I make him shed tears?' At length, after having rapidly written my work, in order the sooner to send it to you, I read it to the actors."

August 25: "My dear and amiable critics, I wish that you could be witnesses of the success of *'Zaïre';* you would see that your advice was not useless, and that there was very little of it which I did not profit by. Permit me, my dear Cideville, to express to you freely the pleasure I enjoy in seeing the success of a work which you approved. My satisfaction increases in communicating it to you. Never piece was so well played as *'Zaïre'* at the fourth representation. I wished you there; you would have seen that the public did not hate your friend. I appeared in a box, and the whole pit clapped me. I blushed, I hid myself; but I should be a hypocrite if I did not confess to you that I was sensibly touched. It is sweet not to be without honor in one's own country: I am sure you will love me the more for the avowal. But, messieurs, send me back *'Eriphile,'* which I cannot do without, and which is going to be played at Fontainebleau. *Mon Dieu!* what a thing it is to choose an interesting subject! *'Eriphile'* is far better written than *'Zaïre';* but all the ornaments, all the spirit and all the force of poetry are not worth—so people say—one touch of sentiment."

By his tragedies, poems in various moods, a comedy, and general repute as a wit, Voltaire had established his fame before the close of 1725. He was a favorite at court, a circumstance he turned to good account, and received a modest pension. With success such as this it might be supposed that a man but little past thirty would have been contented, if not completely happy. His letters at this time show that the courtier's life was not really congenial. Parton selects a few passages from the correspondence, dated just before the marriage of Louis XV.

"Every one here pays court to Madame de Beseuval, who is a distant relation of the queen. This lady, who has some *esprit,* receives with much modesty the marks of baseness which are given her. I saw her yesterday at the house of Marshal de Villars. Some one asked her what relation she was to the queen. She replied that queens have no relations. These nuptials of Louis XV. are an injury to poor Voltaire. They talk of not paying the pensions, and even of not preserving them; but in recompense a new tax is to be imposed, to buy laces and fabrics for Mademoiselle Leczinska. This is like the marriage of the sun, which made the frogs murmur. I have been but three days at Versailles, and already I wish myself out of it."

From Fontainebleau, September 17, after the marriage: "Two noblemen died to-night. Assuredly, both of them took their time ill; for in the midst of all the hullabaloo of the king's marriage, their deaths made not the least sensation. . . . Every one here is enchanted with the

queen's goodness and politeness. The first thing she did after her marriage was to distribute among the princesses and ladies of the palace all the magnificent trifles which they call her *casket,* consisting of jewels of every kind except diamonds. When she saw the casket wherein they were placed she said, 'This is the first time in my life that I have been able to make presents.' She had on a little rouge on her wedding-day—as much as was necessary to keep her from looking pale. She fainted a moment in the chapel, but only for form's sake. There was comedy the same day. I had prepared a little divertisement, which M. de Mortemart [first gentleman] was not willing to have executed. They gave in its place 'Amphitryon' and Molière's *'Le Médecin Malgré Lui,'* which did not seem too suitable. After supper there were fireworks of very little ingenuity or variety. . . . For the rest, there is a confusion here, a pressure, a tumult, that are frightful. During these first days of hubbub I shall avoid having myself presented to the queen. I shall wait until the crowd has subsided, and her majesty has recovered a little from the bewilderment caused by all this *sabbat.* Then I shall try to have *'Œdipe' and 'Mariamne'* played before her. I shall dedicate both to her; and she has already sent me word that she would be very willing I should take that liberty. The King and Queen of Poland—for here we no more recognize King Augustus—have sent to ask me for the poem of 'Henry IV.,' which the queen has already heard spoken of with eulogium. But nothing must be pressed."

Writing to Madame de Bernières on October 8, he says: "I have not a moment to myself. We have had to perform *'Œdipe,' 'Mariamne,'* and *'L'Indiscret.'* I have been some time at Belébat with Madame de Prie. Besides that, I have been almost always in agitation, cursing the life of a courtier, vainly chasing a little good fortune which seemed to present itself to me, and which fled as soon as I thought I had it; in ill-humor, and not daring to show it; seeing many ridiculous things, and not daring to speak of them; not ill with the queen; much in favor with Madame de Prie—and all that doing nothing for me, except making me lose my time and keeping me from you. . . . Oh, madame, I am not in my element here. Have pity upon a poor man who has abandoned his country for a foreign land. Insensate that I am! In two days I set out to see King Stanislaus; for there is no folly of which I am incapable."

To his friend Thieriot, a week later: "I have had the folly to abandon my talents and my friends for the illusions of the court, for expectations purely imaginary. . . . I have been very well received here by the queen. She has shed tears at the performance of *'Mariamne,'* and she has laughed at *'L'Indiscret.'* She speaks to me frequently; she calls me 'My poor Voltaire.' A fool would be content with all that; but unfortunately I have sense enough to feel that praise is of small account, that the role of a poet at court has always something in it a little ridiculous, and that it is not permitted to any one to be in this country of ours without some kind of status. Every day they give me

hopes, which yield me little nourishment. You would hardly believe, my dear Thieriot, how tired I am of my court life. Henry IV. is very foolishly sacrificed to the court of Louis XV. I mourn the moments which I take away from him. The poor child already ought to have appeared in quarto, on fine paper, with a fair margin and handsome type. That will surely be done this winter, whatever happens. Epic poetry is my forte, or I am much deceived. . . . . All the poets in the world, I believe, have come together at Fontainebleau. The queen is every day assassinated with Pindaric odes, sonnets, epistles, and marriage songs. I imagine she takes the poets for the court fools; and if so she is very right, for it is a great folly for a man of letters to be here, where he neither gives nor receives pleasure."

The fluctuating relations between Frederick the Great and Voltaire have been described. Here are one or two letters written in the first flush of enthusiasm. This is to his friend Count d'Argental, dated September, 1750:

"I find a port after thirty years of storms. I find the protection of a king, the conversation of a philosopher, the agreeable qualities of an amiable man, all united in one who for sixteen years has wished to console me for my misfortunes, and put me in security against my enemies. Everything is to be feared for me in Paris as long as I live, notwithstanding my places and the goodness even of the king. Here, I am sure of a destiny forever tranquil. If one can be sure of anything, it is of the character of the King of Prussia. I was formerly

much put out with him on account of a French officer, condemned cruelly by the king's father, whose pardon I had asked. I did not know that this favor had been accorded. The King of Prussia does very noble actions without notifying his people. He has just sent fifty thousand francs in a very pretty little casket to an old lady of the court, whom his father had condemned to a punishment entirely in the Turkish style. This ancient despotic wrong of the late king was spoken of again some time ago; he was unwilling either to show disrespect to the memory of his father or to allow the injustice to remain. He chose an estate of that lady as the scene of a sham-fight of ten thousand troops—a kind of spectacle worthy of the conqueror of Austria. He pretended that during the exercises a hedge had been cut down on the land of the lady in question. Not a twig of it had been laid low; but he persisted in saying that damage had been done, and sent the fifty thousand francs to repair it. My dear and honored friend, how then are great men constituted, if this man is not one?"

A week or two later he writes to his niece: "He is as amiable as you are. He is a king, I grant; but it is a passion of sixteen years; he has turned my head. I have had the insolence to think that nature made me for him. I have found a conformity so singular between all his tastes and mine that I have forgotten he is sovereign of one half of Germany, while the other trembles at his name; that he has gained five battles; that he is the greatest general in Europe; that he is surrounded by big

devils of heroes six feet high. . . . You other Parisians think that I am in Lapland; know that we have had a summer as warm as yours, that we have eaten good peaches and good muscat pears, and that for three or four degrees of the sun, more or less, you must not look down upon people."

Jean Jacques Rousseau had come into prominence by his essay on the question, "Has the Restoration of the Sciences Contributed to Purify or to Corrupt Manners?" This he followed up with a "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality," in which he advocated the return to nature, and he sent a copy to Voltaire. The following interesting correspondence resulted. The first letter is from Voltaire, August 30, 1755:

"I have received, monsieur, your new book against the human race. I thank you for it. You will please men, to whom you tell truths which concern them, but you will not correct them. One could not paint in stronger colors the horrors of human society, from which our ignorance and our weakness expect so many consolations. No one has ever employed so much intellect in the attempt to prove us beasts. A desire seizes us to walk on four paws when we read your work. Nevertheless, as it is more than sixty years since I lost the habit, I feel, unfortunately, that it is impossible for me to resume it, and I leave that natural mode of walking to those who are more worthy of it than you and I. Nor can I embark to go among the savages of Canada: first, because the maladies with which I am afflicted retain me near the greatest physician

in Europe, and I should not find the same succors among the Missouris; secondly, because war has broken out in that country, and the example of our nations has rendered the savages almost as wicked as we are. I limit myself to be a peaceful savage in the solitude which I have chosen in your country, where you ought to be.

"I agree with you that literature and the sciences have sometimes been the cause of much evil. The enemies of Tasso rendered his life a tissue of misfortunes; those of Galileo made him groan in prison at the age of seventy years for having known the motion of the earth, and, what was more shameful, they compelled him to retract. No sooner had your friends begun the *'Dictionaire Encyclopédique'* than those who presumed to be their rivals called them deists, atheists, and even Jansenists.

"If I dared to reckon myself among those whose labors have been recompensed by persecution alone, I could show you men in a rage to destroy me, from the day that I gave the tragedy of *'Œdipe';* I should show you a library of ridiculous calumnies printed against me; an ex-Jesuit priest, whom I saved from capital punishment, paying me by defamatory libels for the service which I had rendered him; I should show you a man, still more culpable, printing my own work upon the 'Age of Louis XIV.,' with notes, in which the most brutal ignorance poured forth the most infamous impostures; . . . . I should show you society infected with this kind of men, unknown to all antiquity, who, not being able to embrace

an honest calling, whether that of workman or of lackey, and knowing, unfortunately, how to read and write, become courtiers of literature, live upon our works, steal manuscripts, disfigure them, and sell them; . . . . I should paint you ingratitude, imposture, and rapine pursuing me for forty years, even to the foot of the Alps, even to the brink of my tomb: But what shall I conclude from all those tribulations? That I ought not to complain; that Pope, Descartes, Bayle, Camoens, and a hundred others have experienced the same injustice, and greater; that this destiny is that of almost all those whom the love of letters has too powerfully influenced.

"Confess, monsieur, that these are trifling private misfortunes, which the community scarcely perceives. What does it matter to the human race that some hornets pillage the honey of some bees? Men of letters make a great noise about all these little quarrels; the rest of the world does not know them, or laughs at them.

"Of all the bitternesses spread over human life these are the least fatal. The thorns attached to literature and to the reputation which it gives are nothing but flowers compared with other evils which, in all times, have overwhelmed the earth. Admit that neither Cicero, nor Varro, nor Lucretius, nor Virgil, nor Horace had the least share in the proscriptions. Marius was an ignorant man; the barbarous Sulla, the debauched Antony, the imbecile Lepidus, read little of Plato and Socrates; and as to that tyrant without courage, Octavius Cepias, surnamed so unworthily Augustus, he was

a detestable assassin only while he was deprived of the society of men of letters.

"Confess that Petrarch and Boccaccio did not cause the intestine troubles of Italy; confess that the badinage of Marot did not cause the massacres of St. Bartholomew, nor the tragedy of 'The Cid' the troubles of the Fronde. Great crimes have seldom been committed except by celebrated ignoramuses. That which makes, and will always make, of this world a vale of tears is the insatiable cupidity and the indomitable pride of men, from Thamas Kouli-khan, who did not know how to read, to a clerk of the tax office, who knows only how to cipher. Literature nourishes the soul, rectifies it, consoles it; it was of service to you, monsieur, at the time when you wrote against it. You are like Achilles, who inveighed against glory, and like Father Malebranche, whose brilliant imagination wrote against imagination.

"If any one ought to complain of literature, it is myself, since at all times and in all places it has served to persecute me; but we must love it, despite the abuse which is made of it, as we must love society, the agreeableness of which is corrupted by so many wicked men; as we must love our country, whatever injustice we suffer in it; as we must love and serve the Supreme Being, notwithstanding the superstitions and the fanaticism which so often dishonor His worship.

"M. Chappuis informs me that your health is very bad; you should come to re-establish it in your native air, to enjoy liberty, to drink with me the milk of our cows, and browse our herbs.

I am very philosophically, and with the most tender esteem," etc.

Rousseau's reply is dated September 10, 1755:

"It is for me to thank you, monsieur, in all regards. In offering you the draught of my sad reveries, I did not think to make you a present worthy of you, but to acquit myself of a duty, and to render you an act of homage which we all owe you as our chief. Sensible, also, of the honor which you do my country, I share the gratitude of my fellow-citizens; and I hope that it will be only augmented when they shall have profited by the instructions you can give them. Adorn the asylum which you have chosen; enlighten a people worthy of your lessons; and you, who know so well how to paint virtue and liberty, teach us to cherish them within our walls, as we do in your writings. All that approaches you ought to learn from you the path to glory.

"You see that I do not aspire to make men return to the condition of beasts, although I regret much, for my part, the little I have lost of that condition. With regard to you, monsieur, such a return would be a miracle, at once so great and so injurious that it would belong to God alone to perform it and to the devil alone to desire it. Do not try, then, to fall upon four paws; no one in the world would less succeed in the attempt than you. You set us up too well upon our two feet for you to cease to stand upon yours.

"I admit all the infamies which pursue men celebrated in literature; I even admit all the evils attached to humanity, which seem independent of

our vain knowledge. Men have opened upon themselves so many sources of misery that when chance diverts some one of them they are scarcely less inundated. There are, besides, in the progress of things, some concealed chains of cause and effect which people in general do not perceive, but which will not escape the eye of the sage who is willing to reflect upon them. It was neither Terence, nor Cicero, nor Seneca, nor Virgil, nor Tacitus, it was neither the men of learning nor the poets, who produced the misfortunes of Rome and the crimes of the Romans; but without the poison, slow and secret, which corrupted, little by little, the most vigorous government of which history makes mention, neither Cicero, nor Lucretius, nor Sallust would have existed; or, if they had existed, they would not have written. The amiable age of Lelius and Terence was the remote origin of the brilliant ages of Augustus and Horace, and, at last, of the horrible ages of Seneca and Nero, of Domitian and Martial. The taste for literature and the arts springs in a people from an inward vice which that taste augments. And if it is true that all kinds of human progress are pernicious in their own way, those of the mind and knowledge, which increase our pride and multiply our errors, directly promote our unhappiness. But there comes a time when the unhappiness of man is such that the very causes which have created it are necessary to prevent its increase: the sword must be left in the wound, lest the wounded man expire in drawing it out.

"As to myself, if I had followed my first voca-

tion, and if I had neither read nor written, I should doubtless have been happier. Nevertheless, if letters were now annihilated, I should be deprived of the only pleasure which remains to me. It is in the bosom of literature that I find consolation for all my ills; it is among those who cultivate it that I taste the sweets of friendship, and learn to enjoy life without fearing death. I owe to it the little that I am; I owe to it even the honor of being known to you. But let us consult our interests in our business, and truth in our writings. Although philosophers, historians, scholars, are necessary to enlighten the world and lead its blind inhabitants, if the sage 'Memnon' has told me the truth, I know nothing so silly as a people of sages.

. . . . "If we explore the original source of the disorders of society, we shall find that all the evils from which men suffer come to them through error much more than through ignorance, and that what we do not know at all injures us much less than what we think we know. Now, what surer means of running from error to error than the rage to know everything? If men had not supposed they knew that the earth did not revolve, they would not have punished Galileo for having said it revolved. If philosophers alone had claimed the title of philosopher, the Encyclopedia would have had no persecutor. If a hundred myrmidons did not aspire to glory, you would enjoy yours in peace; or, at least, you would have only rivals worthy of you.

"Do not then be surprised to feel some thorns inseparable from the flowers which crown great

talents. The assaults of your enemies are the satirical acclamations which follow triumphal processions. It is the eagerness of the public for all your writings which produces the thefts of which you complain; but it is not easy to interpolate them, for neither iron nor lead will blend with gold. Permit me to say to you, from the interest which I take in your repose and in our instruction: despise the vain clamors by which it is less sought to do you harm than to prevent your doing good. The more you are criticised the more reason you should give us to admire you. A good book is a terrible response to printed attacks; and who will dare to attribute to you works you did not write, as long as you write only inimitable ones?

"I am grateful for your invitation, and if this winter leaves me in a condition to go in the spring to dwell in my native land, I shall avail myself of your goodness; but I should like better to drink the water of your fountain than the milk of your cows; and, as to the herbs of your garden, I believe I should find in it only the lotus, which is not the food of beasts, and the moly,[1] which prevents men from becoming beasts."

[1] The herb given to Ulysses to save him from enchantment by Circe.

FAC-SIMILE LETTER OF VOLTAIRE

Nº. 9/. 12 Juillet 66. du Chateau de ferney 9e. Juillet 1766.

Monsieur

Le 9 juillet 1766.

M. Je n'ai pû refuser au Régisseur des biens des relig. fugitifs ~~[illegible]~~ ~~qui~~ ~~[illegible]~~ La permission de faire le domne. d'asservens ; Les ordces Royaux établissent en ag[illegible]ions ; mais ces mêmes ordces donnent le tems et la liberté aux ~~[illegible]~~ propriétaires de fournir leurs moiens et ~~[illegible]~~ leurs titres pour obtenir Le renvoy des demandes mal fondées. Je vous prie de croire M. ~~que~~ j'apporteray toutte l'attention possible a la defense qu'emploiera la famille [illegible] pour sa [illegible] et que je serois tres satisfait de pouvoir assurer bientot sa tranquilité

Je suis avec une respectueuse Estime

Je vous demande instamment une grace, et j'ose me flatter que vous me l'accorderez. Si elle est

famille de son bien. vous n'immolerez pas une famille à un procureur. vous réprimez la vexation et la chicane loin de les encourager. la bonté de votre cœur sera touchée de l'état où l'on veut réduire une famille par des allégations trompeuses. j'implore votre équité et votre generosité.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec beaucoup de respect

Monsieur

Votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur Voltaire

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

ON SPINOZA.

TO HIS HIGHNESS, MONSEIGNEUR, PRINCE OF—

Monseigneur: It seems to me that often the personality of Spinoza has been as badly judged as his works. Here is what is said of him in two historical dictionaries:

"Spinoza had such a desire to immortalize himself that he would willingly have sacrificed to his glory the present life, had it been necessary to be cut to pieces by an enraged mob. The absurdities of Spinozism have been thoroughly refuted by Jean Bredembourg, a citizen of Rotterdam."

In this there are as many mistakes as words. Spinoza was exactly the contrary of the portrait which has been drawn of him. One must detest his atheism, but one should not lie in regard to his personality. Never was a man farther removed in every sense from vainglory, it must be owned; let us not calumniate him in condemning him. Minister Colerus, who lived a long time in the very room where Spinoza died, affirms with all his contemporaries that Spinoza always lived in profound retirement, seeking to withdraw himself from the world and eschewing all superfluity, modest in conversation, careless in dress, working with his hands

and never putting his name to any of his works. This is not the character of a man ambitious of glory. With regard to Bredembourg, far from refuting Spinoza very well, I venture to believe that he refuted him very badly. I have read his work and I leave the judgment of it to whoever, like me, may have the patience to read it. Bredembourg was so far from simply overwhelming Spinoza that he was himself frightened by the weakness of his rejoinders and became the disciple of him whom he had assailed: a notable example of the wretchedness and of the inconstancy of the human mind. The life of Spinoza has been written in sufficient detail, and is well enough known for me not to relate any of it here. This Jew, still young, was ill-treated by the synagogue. Accused by two young persons of his age of not believing in Moses, they began, in order to bring him back into the proper road, by stabbing him with a knife as he was leaving the theatre; some say, as he was leaving the synagogue, which latter is more probable.

After having missed his body, they did not want to miss his soul. They proceeded to the major excommunication, to the grand anathema, to the *chammata.* Spinoza claimed that the Jews were not empowered to exercise this kind of jurisdiction in Amsterdam. The city council referred the decision in this matter to the consistory of pastors and these latter concluded that, if the synagogue had this right, the consistory would possess it in a still higher degree: this consistory decided in favor of the synagogue.

Spinoza was proscribed then by the Jews with

grand ceremony. The Jewish cantor intoned the words of execration. Horns were sounded, inverted black candles were melted drop by drop into a tub full of blood. Benedict Spinoza was devoted to Beelzebub, Satan, and to Astaroth, and all the synagogue cried "Amen." It is strange that this assertion of jurisdiction, which resembled rather a witch's Sabbath than a regular trial, was ever permitted. It may be believed that but for the knife-thrusts and the black candles extinguished in blood, Spinoza never would have written against Moses and against God. Persecution irritates, it emboldens whoever feels genius. It renders irreconcilable him whom indulgence would have checked. Spinoza renounced Judaism but without ever becoming a Christian. He did not publish till 1670, about eight years after his excommunication, his "Treatise on Superstitious Ceremonies," otherwise called "*Tractatus Theologico-Politicus.*" It has been claimed that in this book will be found the seeds of his atheism, in the same way that one always finds an evil physiognomy in a man who has done a base deed. This book is so far removed from atheism that in it Jesus Christ is spoken of as one sent from God. The work is very profound and the best one he ever wrote. I condemn without doubt his sentiments, but I cannot refrain from esteeming his erudition. It was he, it seems to me, who first remarked that the Hebrew word *ruhag,* which we translate *soul,* signified to the Jews "wind," "breath" in its natural sense; that all that is great bore the divine name: the cedar trees of God; the winds of God; the melancholy of Saul, the bad

spirit of God; upright men, as the children of God, etc.

He was the first who developed the dangerous theory of Aben-Ezra that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, nor the book of Joshua by Joshua, and it was not till after him that Leclerc, the celebrated Newton and various Dutch theologians embraced this view. Newton differed from him only in this: that he attributed Moses' book to Samuel, whereas Spinoza made Ezra the author. In the eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters can be seen all the reasons which Spinoza gives for his system. The chronology there has been found to be very exact; great knowledge of the history, speech, and the customs of his people; more method and reason than in all the rabbins together. It seems to me that few writers before him had proved clearly that the Jews recognized prophets among the Gentiles. In a word, he made a culpable use of his information, but he made a very great one. In the ancient philosophers it is necessary to search for atheism. It is not found clearly revealed except in the posthumous works of Spinoza. His "Treatise on Atheism" not being under this title and having been written in obscure Latin and in very dry style, Count Boulainvilliers translated it into French under the title of "Spinoza's Refutation." We have only the venom. Boulainvilliers apparently had not the time to give the antidote.

Few people have remarked that Spinoza in his dire book speaks of an infinite and supreme being. He announces God while he wishes to destroy Him. The arguments with which Bayle overwhelms him

would appear to me irrefragable if Spinoza actually admitted a God; for this God, being only the immensity of things, at the same time both matter and thought, it is absurd, as Bayle has very well proved, to suppose that God is at the same time the actor and the receiver, cause and effect, doing evil and suffering it, loving Himself, hating Himself, killing Himself, consuming Himself. A good spirit, adds Bayle, would prefer to cultivate the earth with his teeth and nails to cultivating an hypothesis so shocking and absurd, for, according to Spinoza, those who say "the Germans have killed 10,000 Turks" speak badly and falsely; they should say "God, under the form of 10,000 Germans, has killed God, appearing under the form of 10,000 Turks."

Bayle is very right if Spinoza acknowledges a God, but the fact is that he does not acknowledge one at all, and that he has only made use of this sacred word in order not to frighten men too much. Influenced by Descartes, he makes improper use of Descartes' equally celebrated and senseless expression: "Give me motion and matter and I will form a world." Possessed further by the incomprehensible and antiphysical idea that everything is complete, he has imagined that there can exist only a single substance, a sole power which reasons in men, feels and remembers in the case of animals, sparkles in the fire, flows in the water, is borne along with the wind, rumbles in the thunder, vegetates on earth and extends throughout all space. According to him, everything is necessary; everything is eternal. Creation is impossible; no design

in the structure of the universe, in the permanence of species, in the sensation of individuals. The ears are not made to hear, the eyes to see, the heart to receive and put in motion the blood, the stomach to digest, the brain to think, the organs of generation to give life, and the divine intentions are nothing but the effects of a blind necessity. This, in brief, is the system of Spinoza. Here, I think, are the points at which his citadel must be attacked —a citadel built, if I am not mistaken, on ignorance of physics and on the most monstrous abuse of metaphysics.

It seems, and one must flatter himself with the fact, that there are to-day few atheists. The author of "*La Henriade*" has said that a catechism announces God to children and Newton demonstrates Him to sages. The more nature is known the more its author is adored. Atheism cannot benefit morality and may do it a good deal of harm. It is almost as dangerous as fanaticism. You are, Monseigneur, equally removed from both, and that is what authorizes the liberty which I have taken to place the truth before your gaze without any disguise. I have replied to all your questions, extending from the learned buffoon, Rabelais, to the rash metaphysician, Spinoza. I might have been able to add to this list a large number of little books which are scarcely known except to librarians, but I have feared that in multiplying the number of culpable ones, I might seem to diminish their iniquity. I hope that the little I have said will strengthen your highness in your sympathy for our dogmas and our writings, and that you will see that they have

not been combated except by stubborn stoics, by savants puffed up with their science, by the worldly minded who only know their vain reasoning, by jesters who take witticism for arguments; by theologians, in short, who, instead of walking in the ways of God, allow themselves to wander off into their own ways. Once more, allow me to say that what must console a mind as noble as yours is the fact that atheism which ruins to-day so many souls can never hurt either the peace of states or the polish of society. Controversy has everywhere caused blood to flow and atheism has staunched it. It is a bad remedy, I avow it, but it has healed the most cruel wounds. It is excellent for this life; it is detestable for the life to come. It surely condemns its believer, but it renders him peaceable. Your country was formerly aflame for arguments; atheism brought it harmony. It is clear that if Poltrot, Jacques Clément, Jaurigni, Balthazar Gérard, Jean Châtel, Damiens, the Jesuit Malagrida, and others, had been atheists, there would have been fewer princes assassinated. God forbid that I should be willing to prefer atheism to the sacred religion of the Ravaillacs, the Damiens, the Malagridas, which they have ignored, and I say only that it is more agreeable to live with the atheists than with the Ravaillacs and the Brinvilliers who go to confession, and if your highness is not of my opinion, I am wrong.

ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

We have to examine into that which is called the faculty of thinking in the different species of mankind. We are to investigate how their ideas come, whether there is a soul distinct from the body, whether this soul is immortal, whether it is free, has virtues, vices, etc., but most of these ideas have a dependence on the existence or the non-existence of a God. It is necessary, I believe, to commence by sounding the depth of this great principle. Let us divest ourselves here more than ever of all passion and prejudice, and in good faith let us see what our reason can teach us regarding this question: Is there a God or not? In the first place, I remark that there are peoples who have no knowledge of a Creator; these, in truth, are barbarians and few in number; still, they are men, and if the knowledge of God is necessary to human nature, the wild Hottentots would have as sublime an idea as we of a Supreme Being. Furthermore, there is not, among civilized peoples, any child which has the least conception of a God. Such an idea is inculcated with difficulty. Children pronounce the word "God" often throughout their lives without attaching to it any fixed notion; you see, moreover, that ideas of God differ as much among men as their religions and their laws, and hereupon I cannot refrain from indulging in this reflection: is it possible that the knowledge of a God, our creator, our preserver, our all, is less necessary to man than a nose and five fingers? All men are born with a nose and five fingers, but no one is born with a knowledge

of God. Whether that is deplorable or not, such is certainly the condition of humanity. Let us see if we acquire in time the knowledge of God just as we arrive at mathematical notions and some metaphysical conceptions. What can we do better, in a research so important, than to weigh what can be said *pro* and *contra;* than to decide in favor of what appears to us more conformable to our reason?

SUMMARY OF THE REASONS IN FAVOR OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

There are two ways of arriving at a notion of a being who presides over the universe. The most natural, the most perfect for common capacities is to consider not only the order which is in the universe, but also the end to which each thing seems to correspond. Many stout volumes have been composed on this single idea and all these stout volumes together contain nothing more than this argument: When I see a watch whose hand marks the hours, I conclude that an intelligent being has arranged the springs of this machine in order that the hand may mark the hour. Thus, when I see the springs of the human body, I conclude that an intelligent being has arranged these organs in order that they may be received and nourished nine months in the womb; that the eyes are given for seeing, the hands for seizing, etc., but from this sole argument I cannot conclude anything further than that it is probable that an intelligent and superior being has skilfully prepared and fashioned the matter. I cannot conclude from

that alone that this being has made matter out of nothing and that he is infinite in every sense. In vain do I seek in my mind the connection of these ideas: *it is probable that I am the work of a being more powerful than I;* therefore, this being has existed from all eternity; has created everything, is infinite, etc. I do not see the chain which leads straight to this conclusion. I see only that there is something more powerful than I, and beyond this, nothing.

The second argument is more metaphysical, less likely to be seized by coarse minds, and leads to much vaster conceptions. Here is a synopsis of them:

I exist, hence something exists. If something exists, then something has existed from all eternity, for that which exists either exists of itself or has received its being from another. If it exists through itself, it exists necessarily; it has always existed necessarily and this is God. If it has received its being from another, and this second one from a third, that from which this last has received its being must necessarily be God. For you cannot conceive that one being gives being to another if he has not the power to create. Furthermore, if you say that a thing receives its existence (I do not say form) from another thing, and that other thing from a third, this third from another yet, and thus going back even to infinity, you state an absurdity. All these beings, then, would have no cause of their existence. Taken altogether they have no external cause for their existence; each taken in particular, they have no internal cause:

that is to say, taken altogether, they owe their existence to nothing; taken each one in particular, no one exists through itself; then no one can exist necessarily. I am, then, reduced to avowing that there is a being which has existed necessarily through himself from all eternity and who has originated all other beings. Hence, it follows, essentially that this being is infinite in duration, immensity and power, for who can bound him? "But," you will say to me, "the material world is precisely this being which we are looking for." Let us investigate in good faith if the thing is possible. If this material world is existent through itself from an absolute necessity, it is a contradiction in terms to suppose that the least part of this universe can exist otherwise than of itself, for if it exists at this moment from an absolute necessity, this word alone excludes every other manner of existence. For certainly this table on which I am writing, this pen which I am using have not always been what they are; these thoughts which I trace on the paper did not even exist a moment ago; therefore, they do not exist of necessity. Now, if each part does not exist from absolute necessity, it is impossible that the whole exists of itself. I produce motion; hence, the motion was not in existence before; hence, the motion is not essential to matter and the matter received it from without, and there is a God which gave it. Likewise, intelligence is not essential to matter, for a rock or a grain of wheat does not think. From whom, then, is it likely that these parts of matter which think and feel have received sensation and thought? It cannot be from

themselves, since they feel in spite of themselves; it cannot be from matter in general, since thought and sensation are not essential to matter. They have, therefore, received these gifts from the hand of a Supreme Being, intelligent, infinite and the originating cause of all beings.

The foregoing are in substance the proofs of the existence of a God and the synopsis of several volumes—a synopsis which each reader can amplify as he wishes.

The following, with the same brevity, are the objections which can be raised to this system:

1. If God is not this material world, He created it or He gave to some other being the power to create it, which amounts to the same thing, but in making this world He either produced it from nothing or from His own divine nature. He cannot have made it out of mere nothing. He cannot have produced it from Himself since this world in this case would be essentially part of the divine essence; therefore I must not admit creation.

2. God might have made this world either from necessity or from choice. If He made it from necessity, He must have always been under the obligation of making it, for this necessity is eternal; therefore, in this case, the world would be eternal and created, which involves a contradiction. If God made it freely from pure choice without any antecedent reason, that is another contradiction, for it is contradictory to suppose a being infinitely wise making everything without any determining reason, and a being infinitely powerful having existed

through eternity without making the least use of his power.

3. If it appears to most men that an intelligent being has impressed the seal of his wisdom on all nature and that each thing seems to be made for a certain end, it is still more true in the eyes of philosophers that everything is created in nature by the eternal, independent, and immutable laws of mathematics; the construction and the duration of the human body are the result of the equilibrium of fluids and of the force of levers. The more we learn of the structure of the universe, the more closely we see it is in conformity with the laws of mathematics, from the stars to the smallest mote. It is, therefore, permissible to believe that these laws having operated by their nature, the results are necessary effects which are taken for the arbitrary determinations of an intelligent power. For example, a field produces grass because such is the nature of its soil moistened by the rain, and not because there are horses which have need of hay.

4. If the arrangement of this world's parts and all that takes place among the beings which have sentient life—if all this proves the existence of a creator and a master—it would more strongly prove the rule of a barbarous being; for the admission of final causes will compel one to say that God, infinitely wise and infinitely good, has given life to all creatures in order that they may be devoured by one another. In fact, if we consider all the animals, it will be seen that each species has an irresistible instinct which forces it to destroy another species.

In regard to human miseries, there is room to

reproach the divinity throughout our lives. It is no answer to say that the wisdom and goodness of God are not fashioned like ours: this argument would have no weight in the minds of many people who reply that they can only judge of justice by the idea which they assume God has given them of it; that one can only measure with the measure which He has furnished, and that it is as impossible for us not to regard as barbarous, a being who would conduct himself as a barbarous man, as it is impossible for us to believe that no being whatsoever is six feet high, when we have measured one and found it to be that height.

If we are told that our measure is faulty, we shall be told a thing which seems to involve contradiction, for it is God Himself who gave us this false idea; therefore, God will have made us only in order to deceive us. Now, this is saying that a being who is absolute perfection plunges his creatures into error which is, strictly speaking, the sole imperfection: this is plainly a contradiction. Finally, the materialists will conclude by saying: "We have fewer absurdities to swallow in the system of atheism than in that of deism, for on the one hand, it is necessary to the truth that we conceive as eternal and infinite this world which we can see, but on the other, it is necessary for us to imagine a being infinite and eternal and that we add to it the creation of which we can have no conception. It is, therefore, easier for us, they will conclude, "not to believe in a God than it is to believe in Him."

THE FAMILIES OF CALAS AND SIRVEN.

AN ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC UPON THE PARRICIDES IMPUTED TO THEM.

Here, then, on account of religion, in one year in France are two accusations of parricide and two families legally sacrificed by fanaticism.

The same fanaticism that stretched Calas upon the wheel at Toulouse dragged to the gallows the whole family of Sirven, in a jurisdiction of the same province; and the same defender of innocence, M. Elias de Beaumont, advocate of the Parliament of Paris, who justified Calas, has also justified the Sirvens, by a memorial signed by several advocates —a memorial which demonstrates that the sentence pronounced against the Sirvens is still more absurd than the arret against the Calas family.

This, in a few words, is the fact, the recital of which may serve to instruct those who cannot obtain a copy of the eloquent address of M. de Beaumont.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty-one, at the very time that the Protestant family of Calas were in fetters, accused with having assassinated Marc Antony Calas, who it was supposed, was desirous of embracing the Catholic religion, it happened that a daughter of the said Paul Sirven, commissary at Terrier, in the country of Castres, was presented to the bishop of Castres by a woman, who had the management of his house. The bishop, being informed that this girl was of a Calvinist family, shut her up in a kind of convent

at Castres, called the house of the Regents. This young girl was flogged into a knowledge of the Catholic religion, and this discipline was so severely bestowed upon her, that she became insane. Having escaped from her confinement, she threw herself into a well, in the middle of the country, at a great distance from her father's house, near a village called Mazamet. Hereupon the village justice reasoned thus: "At Toulouse, Calas will be broken upon the wheel, and his wife burned, who have doubtless destroyed their son, to prevent his going to mass: I should therefore, according to the example of my superiors, do as much upon this occasion to the Sirvens, who have, doubtless, drowned their daughter for the same cause.

"It is true I have no proof that the father, mother, and two sisters of this girl have assassinated her; but I have heard that there is no more proof against Calas and his family, so I run no risk. It would, perhaps, be too much for a country justice to break people upon the wheel and burn them; but I shall, at least, have the pleasure of arresting a whole Huguenot family, and shall be paid for my trouble out of the confiscated effects."

For his greater security, this religious fanatic had the corpse examined by a doctor as ignorant of medicine as he was of jurisprudence. The doctor, quite astonished at not finding the girl's stomach filled with water, and not being aware that it is impossible for water to enter a body from which the air cannot issue, concluded that the girl had been knocked on the head, and afterwards thrown into the well.

A devotee in the neighborhood affirmed that this was the practice in all Protestant families.

At length, after many proceedings, as irregular as the reasoning was absurd, the justice decreed that the father, mother, and sisters of the deceased should be apprehended.

At this news Sirven convenes his friends. They are all convinced of his innocence; but the affair of Calas filled the whole province with terror. They advise Sirven not to expose himself to the madness of fanaticism. He flies with his wife and daughters at an inclement season. This unhappy band are compelled to cross on foot mountains covered with snow; one of the daughters of Sirven, who had been married about a year, is brought to-bed upon the ice. Dying as she is, she is forced to carry her expiring infant in her arms.

The first news that at length reaches this family upon their arrival in a place of safety is, that the father and mother are condemned to death, and the two sisters, declared equally culpable, to perpetual banishment; that their estate is confiscated; and that they have nothing left in this world but opprobium and misery.

This may be seen more at length in the excellent report of M. de Beaumont, which contains complete proofs of the purest innocence and of the most detestable injustice.

Providence, which allowed that the first attempts which produced the justification of Calas, who died upon the wheel in Languedoc, should come from the extremity of the mountains and neighboring parts of Switzerland, hath again been pleased that

the vindication of the Sirvens should issue from the same solitude.

The children of Calas took refuge there, the family of Sirven there sought an asylum at the same time. Sympathizing and truly religious men, who have had the consolation of serving these two unfortunate families, and who pitied their disasters and respected their virtues, could not then present petitions for the Sirvens, as they could for the others, because the criminal prosecutions against the Sirvens proceeded more slowly, and continued longer.

And, afterwards, how could a wandering family, four hundred miles distant from their country, recover the necessary proofs for their justification?

What was to be done by a father overwhelmed with misery, a dying wife, whose grief had, in fact, nearly destroyed her, and two daughters, as unfortunate as their father and mother?

It was necessary to legally require a copy of the proceedings against them. Forms, perhaps necessary, but whose effect is often to oppress the innocent and wretched, would not allow it. Their intimidated relatives did not dare write to them. All that this family could learn in a foreign country was, that they were condemned to death at home. Were it known with what care and difficulty some judicial proofs were extracted in their favor, it would be pitiful.

By what kind of fatality has it become so easy to oppress, and so difficult to succor?

The same forms of justice could not be used for the Sirvens which had been employed by the family

of Calas, because the latter had been condemned by a parliament, and the Sirvens had been tried only by subordinate judges, from whom an appeal lay to the same parliament.

We shall not repeat anything that has been said by the eloquent and generous M. de Beaumont; but having considered how closely these two occurrences are united with the interests of mankind, we believe it is for the same interest to attack at its source the fanaticism which produced them.

In the present instance, the subjects are only two obscure families; but when the most unknown creature dies of a contagion which hath long desolated the earth, it is a declaration to the world that the fatal disorder still exists. All men should therefore be upon their guard; and skilled physicians should be employed to discover remedies for abating the devastating pestilence.

Perhaps the forms or jurisprudence may not allow the petition of the Sirvens to gain access to the King of France or his council—but it has been received by the people—and the people—the judge of all judges—will render a just decision.

FANATICISM.

Human nature hath ever been susceptible of errors; but these have not constantly been homicides. We may have been ignorant that the earth revolved around the sun; we may have believed in fortune-tellers; we may have given credit to the prognostics of birds; have thought that serpents

were enchanted; that parti-colored animals might by produced by displaying to the mothers objects of different hues; we may have been persuaded that in the declension of the moon the marrow of the bones diminishes; that corn must rot to grow, etc. But such kinds of folly have not, at least, produced persecution, discord, or murders.

Other species of madness have disturbed the earth, and given vent to a deluge of blood. We are not sufficiently acquainted, for instance, with the number of wretches that have been delivered up to the executioner by ignorant judges, who quietly and without scruple condemned them to the flames upon an accusation of sorcery.

There has not been a single tribunal in Christendom, that has not often been polluted with such judicial assassinations during the last fifteen hundred centuries; and when I assert that there have been amongst the Christians upwards of one hundred thousand victims to this idiotic and barbarous jurisprudence, and that the greater part of them were innocent girls and women, I do not charge the account high enough.

Libraries are crammed with books relative to the laws of witchcraft; all the decisions of these judges are founded upon the examples of the magicians of Pharaoh, the witch of Endor, persons possessed, who are mentioned in the Evangelists, and the apostles expressly sent to exorcise people possessed of devils.

No one dared aver that God, through pity for the human race, might formerly have suffered possessions and sorcery, and not allow them at present.

Such a distinction would have appeared to them criminal—victims were absolutely necessary. Christianity was always defiled with such absurd barbarity.

All the fathers of the church believed in magic. Upwards of fifty councils pronounced anathemas against those who made devils enter into men's bodies by virtue of words.

The universal error was sacred. Statesmen, who might have disabused the people, did not think it necessary. They were too much immersed in the torrent of business, and were afraid of the power of prejudice.

They saw that this fanaticism sprang from the bosom of religion itself, and they did not dare strike this unnatural child for fear of wounding its ancient mother—they rather chose to expose themselves to the slavery of popular error than to bravely combat it.

Princes and kings have paid dearly for deceiving the people and encouraging the superstition of the vulgar. Were not the people of Paris taught to believe that King Henry III. used sorcery in his devotions? and were not magical operations long in use to rob him of his unhappy life, whose thread was more surely cut by the knife of a Jacobin, than if all the satanic powers had been conjured up by sorcery?

Did not fanatics wish to conduct Martha Brossier, who was possessed, to Rome, to accuse Henry IV. in the name of the devil, of not being a good Catholic? Each year, in those half-savage times

we are speaking of, was checkered with such adventures.

Did not all that remained of the League at Paris promulgate the rumor that the devil had wrung the handsome Gabrielle d'Estrées' neck?

We should not, it is now said, bring forth to view these histories, so shocking to human nature; and I say, that we should repeat them a thousand times, that they may be constantly present to the public mind.

We should remember that the unfortunate priest Urban Grandier was condemned to the flames by ignorant judges, to gratify a blood-thirsty minister.

Grandier's innocence was evident; but some nuns declared he had bewitched them, and this was enough. God was forgotten to speak only of the devil.

It necessarily happened that the commerce between men and devils being by the priests made articles of faith, and the judges considering this imaginary crime as real and frequent as theft, we found among us more sorcerers than robbers.

EVIL JURISPRUDENCE.

Our rituals and jurisprudence, founded upon the decree of Gratian, were what, in fact, laid the ground-work of magic. A weak people give the alarm, our fathers excommunicated and exorcised those who entered into compacts with the devil, and our judges burned them. It is, therefore, very certain that bargains may be made with the devil.

Now, if these bargains are secretly made, and Beelzebub keeps his word with us, we may be enriched in a single night. It is only necessary for us to go to the nocturnal meeting; and the fear of being discovered should not preponderate over our hopes of the infinite good the devil can do us. Besides, Beelzebub, being more powerful than our justices, he may secure us against them.

Thus reasoned these wretches, and the more fagots that were lighted by fanatical judges, the more idiots were found to brave them.

But there were besides more accusers than criminals. Was a girl with child without her lover being known, it was the devil that had seduced her. Did some husbandmen obtain by their industry a more plentiful harvest than their neighbors, it was because they were sorcerers; and the inquisition burned them, and sold their estates for its emolument.

The Pope delegated throughout all Germany and elsewhere judges who gave up innocent victims to the secular power, so that laymen were for a long time only catch polls and executioners for the priests. It is still the same in Portugal and Spain.

In proportion as a ruler remained ignorant and barbarous, the dominion of the devil was acknowledged. We have a collection of the arrets that were issued in Franche-Comté, against the sorcerers, which was published in 1607, by a chief judge of St. Claude, named Boguet, with the approbation of several bishops.

If a man were to write such a book at present, he would be sent to Bedlam: but at that time all

the other judges were equally cruel and ignorant. Each province had a like register.

In a word, when philosophy began to dawn among men, the persecution of witches ceased; and they are no longer visible upon the earth.

FREE TOLERATION.

What a dreadful passion is that pride which would force men to think like ourselves! But is it not the height of folly to think of bringing them to our dogmas by making them continually revolt at the most atrocious calumnies—by persecutions dragging them to the galleys, to the gibbet, to the wheel, and to the flaming pile?

An Irish priest has lately stated in a pamphlet he has written, but which has remained unknown, that he has heard others assert that we have come a hundred years too late to raise our voices against the want of toleration—that barbarity has taken the place of gentleness, and that this is not the time to complain.

I shall reply to those who speak in this manner: Observe what passes under your own eyes, and if you have a human heart, you will join your compassion to ours.

Eight unhappy preachers have been hanged in France since the year 1745. The bills of confession have excited infinite trouble; and at length an unhappy fanatic, from the dregs of the people, having attempted to assassinate the king in 1757, he answered before the parliament upon his inter-

rogation,[1] that he had undertaken this parricide through a principle of religion; and he added these fatal words:

"He that does no good but to himself is good for nothing."

By whom was he taught this language? Who could teach a sweeper in a college, a mere valet, to talk thus?[2] He maintained when put to the torture, not only that this assassination was a meritorious deed,[3] but that he had heard all the priests in the great hall of the palace, where justice is administered, say the same.

The contagion of fanaticism then still exists. The virus is so little eradicated, that a priest[4] in the country of Calas and Sirven, printed a few years ago, an "Apology for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew." Another priest[5] has published the "Justification of the Murderers of the Curate Grandier"; and when that useful and humane "Treatise on Toleration" appeared in France, it could not be allowed a public sale.

This "Treatise" has indeed done some good—it has dissipated some prejudices—it has inspired a horror for persecutions and fanaticism; but in this picture of religious barbarities, the author has omitted certain features that would have rendered the picture more terrible and the instruction more striking.

The author has been reproached with going too far, when, in order to display how detestable and fanatical is persecution, he introduces a relative of

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[1] Damien's Trial, p. 131. [2] Ibid. p. 135. [3] Ibid. p. 405.
[4] The Abbé de Ceiverac. [5] The Abbé de la Menardaye.

Ravaillac proposing to the Jesuit Letellier the confinement of all the Jansenists.

This fiction might, indeed, appear somewhat *outré* to those who are unacquainted with the silly rage of fanaticism. It will appear very surprising, when it is known, that what is a fiction in the "Treatise on Toleration" is now an historical fact.

We, in effect, find in the "History of the Reformation in Switzerland," that in order to prevent the great change that was ready to burst, some priests in Geneva, in 1536, corrupted a servant maid to poison three of the principal actors in the reformation; and the poison administered not having been strong enough, they put some that was more violent in the bread and wine of the public communion, in order to exterminate all those of the reformed religion in a single morning, and to make the Church of God triumph.[1]

The author of the "Treatise on Toleration" has not mentioned the shocking executions wherein so many unhappy victims perished in the valleys of Piedmont. He has passed over in silence the massacre of six hundred inhabitants of Valencia, men, women, and children, who were murdered by the Catholics on a Sunday in the month of September, 1620. I will not say it was with the consent and assistance of the archbishop of Milan, Charles Borome, who was made a saint.

Some passionate writers have averred this fact,

[1] Ruchat, Vol. I. pp. 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Roset, Vol. III. p. 13. Savion, Vol, 3, 126. Mess. Chouit. p. 26, with the testimonies of the prosecution.

which I am very far from believing—but I say, there is scarce any city or borough in Europe, where blood has not been spilled for religious quarrels—I say, that the human species has sensibly diminished, because women and girls were massacred as well as men—I say, that Europe would have been one-third better peopled, if there had been no theological disputes. And lastly, I say, that so far from forgetting these abominable times, we should frequently take a view of them; and that it is for our age to make reparation by toleration, for this long series of crimes, which has taken place through the want of toleration, during sixteen barbarous ages.

Let it not then be said, that there are no traces left of that shocking fanaticism—of the want of toleration. Fanatics still abound, and are everywhere to be met with, even in those countries that are esteemed the most humane.

The Lutheran and Calvinist preachers, were they masters, would probably be as little inclined to pity, as obdurate, and as intolerant as they upbraid their antagonists with being. The barbarous law, whereby any Roman Catholic is forbidden to reside more than three days in certain countries is not revoked. An Italian, a Frenchman, or an Austrian, cannot occupy a house, or possess an acre of land in their territories; whilst an unknown citizen of Geneva, or Schaffhausen, is at least allowed to purchase manors in France.

If a Frenchman, on the contrary, wanted to purchase an estate in the Protestant republics of which I am speaking, and if the government wisely winked

at it, there would still be some souls formed of such clods, as to rise up against this spirit of toleration.

ANTI-TOLERATION.

One of the causes of the continuance of the revengeful hatred of citizens against their fellow countrymen of another faith, is that unhappy custom of perpetuating divisions by monuments and festivals. Such is the annual procession at Toulouse, wherein thanks are yearly returned to God for four thousand murders. It has been forbidden by several royal ordinances, but has not yet been abolished. Religion and the throne are annually insulted by this barbarous ceremony; and at the end of a century, the insult is doubly increased with the solemnity.

After the secular games have been celebrated, the City asks a plenary indulgence of the Pope in favor of the Procession. It doubtless stands in great need of indulgence, but cannot deserve it whilst eternizing fanaticism.

The last secular ceremony was observed in 1762, at the very time that Calas was expiring upon the wheel. God was praised on the one hand, and innocence massacred on the other. Will posterity believe to what a height superstition was carried in our time upon this unhappy solemnity?

At first, the cobblers appeared in ceremonial costume carrying the head of the first bishop of Toulouse, and prince of Peloponnesus, who incontestably held the see of Toulouse before the death of Jesus Christ. Then come the tilers, laden with the bones of all the children that Herod put to death

one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years ago; and although these children were buried at Ephesus, like the eleven thousand virgins at Cologne, as all the world can testify, they are nevertheless interred at Toulouse.

The dealers in old clothes display a bit of the virgin's gown, which they take great care of, and which they purchased of a female Jew dealer at the fair of Beaumaire.

The relics of St. Peter and St. Paul are carried by the fraternity of tailors. These probably were the dresses made for them by the habit-maker Dorcas. As to their bodies, it is certain they are at Rome, with their keys.

Thirty dead bodies next pass in review. If these mummeries only were considered, they would be ridiculous and disgusting. But piety deceived is nevertheless piety. The credulous people may, at all events fulfil their duty (especially when the police are vigilant) though they carry in procession the bones of four thousand children, who were put to death by the command of Herod in Bethlehem. But so many dead bodies which upon this occasion serve only to create a remembrance of four hundred citizens who were put to death in 1562, can make but a sad impression upon the minds of the living. Add to this the black and white penitents, who march in this procession, with a cloth mask over their faces, resembling ghosts, and who greatly increase the horror of this doleful spectacle.

The people retire from the exhibition with their heads full of phantoms, their hearts inspired with the spirit of fanaticism, and filled with hatred

against their brethren who were insulted by this procession.

In this manner people formerly came from the Chamber of Meditations amongst the Jesuits. The imagination is inflamed at these objects, and the soul becomes atrocious and implacable.

Unhappy mortals! let your festivals soften your manners, sway you to clemency, gentleness and charity. Celebrate the day of Fontenoy, when all the wounded enemies were carried with our own in the same houses, in the same hospitals—where they were treated with the same care and attention. Celebrate the generosity of the English, who raised a subscription in favor of our prisoners in the last war. Celebrate the benefactions which Louis XV. heaped upon the family of Calas; and let this festival be an eternal reparation to injustice. Celebrate the beneficent and useful institutions of the Invalids, of the young ladies of St. Cyr, of the gentlemen of the military school.

Let your festivals commemorate virtuous actions, and not hatred, discord, brutality, bloodshed, and carnage.

FOREIGN CAUSES OF ANTI-TOLERATION

I suppose that all these things were related to a Chinese, or an Indian of good sense, and that he had the patience to listen to them; I suppose that he wishes to learn the cause of the many persecutions in Europe, why such inveterate animosities still burst forth, whence arose so many reciprocal anathemas, so many pastoral instructions, which are no other than defamatory libels, *lettres de cachet*,

which under Louis XIV. filled the prisons and deserts: an answer must be given to him.

We must, blushing, tell him, the one believe in versatile grace, the other in effectual grace. In Avignon they say, that Jesus died for all, and in the suburbs of Paris, that He died for several. There it is averred that marriage is a visible sign of an invisible thing; here it is maintained, there is nothing invisible in this union. There are cities where the appearances of matter may subsist without the apparent matter existing, and where a body may be in fifty different places. There are other cities where matter is thought to be penetrable; and, in fine, to complete the whole, there are in these cities, great edifices where one thing is taught, and other edifices where a quite opposite thing must be believed.

The method of disputation varies with the color of the gowns, so that the disputants dressed in white, gray, and black, never agree—one person's being muffled up in a cloak, and another with a chasuble, will not have the same effect.

These are the causes of this reciprocal anti-toleration, which makes the subjects of the same state at eternal enmity; and by an unaccountable mental disorder, these seeds of discord are still allowed to subsist.

The Indian or Chinese certainly would not be able to comprehend that people should have persecuted one another, and cut one another's throats so long, for such reasons. He would immediately think that such horrid butchery could have no other source than the direct opposite of moral prin-

ciples. He would be greatly surprised, when informed that our morals are all alike, the same as were professed at all times in China, and in India, the same as those by which all people have been governed.

How justly he might pity and despise us, when he found that this uniform and eternal morality could neither unite us, nor make us gentle, and that scholastic subtlety has made monsters of those who, by simply adhering to this same morality, would have been brothers.

What I have here said with respect to the Calases and Sirvens should have been repeated these fifteen hundred years past, from the times of the quarrels of Athanasius and Arius, which the Emperor Constantine immediately treated as senseless, to those of the Jesuit Letellier, and the Jansenist Quesnel, and the bills of confession.

No, there is not a single theological dispute which has not been attended with fatal consequences. Twenty volumes might be compiled from them; but I shall conclude with that of the Cordeliers and Jacobins, who paved the way for the reformation of the powerful republic of Berne. This, amongst a thousand histories, is the most horrible, the most sacrilegious, and, at the same time, the best attested.

PARTY SPIRIT AND FANATICISM.

If a simple monastic dispute could produce such strange and abominable crimes, let us not be astonished at the immense number, which the spirit of

party has originated between so many conflicting sects. Let us ever dread the excesses to which fanaticism leads us. Let us not leave this monster at liberty—let us not cease to cut his talons and destroy his teeth.

Let not reason, so often persecuted, remain silent, or we shall again see the same horrid acts repeated, that have so often disgraced the ages that are passed. The principle, the seed, the contagion of persecution still exists, and if it be not eradicated it will spread over the entire earth.

Judge then, at length, intelligent readers, which is best, to adore with reason and simplicity, to fulfil all the duties of society without originating questions equally fatal and incomprehensible, to be just and beneficent without joining any faction, or to give yourself up to fantastic opinions, which lead weak souls to destructive enthusiasm, and to the commission of crimes detestable and atrocious?

I do not think that I have swerved from my subject, in relating all these examples—in recommending to men that religion which unites them, and not that which divides them—that religion which is of no party, which forms virtuous citizens, and not impotent scholars—that religion which says that the whole law consists in loving God and one's neighbor, and not that which makes a tyrant of God and of one's neighbors so many victims.

Let us not make religion resemble those nymphs in the fable who associated with beasts and brought forth monsters.

Men have been perverted principally by monks. The wise and profound Leibnitz has evidently

proved it. He has shown that the tenth century, which is called the iron age, was far less barbarous than the thirteenth and those succeeding, which produced that herd of beggars, who made vows of living at the expense of laymen, and of tormenting them.

Being enemies to the human species—enemies to themselves as well as to others—incapable of appreciating the benefits of society, they necessarily detested it. They display amongst them a rigor under which they all groaned, and which they all helped to increase.

Every monk shakes off the chain which he forged for himself, strikes his brother with it, and is struck in his turn. Miserable in their sacred retreats, they want to make others miserable also. Their cloisters are the abode of repentance, discord, and hatred. Their secret jurisdiction is that of Morocco and Algiers. They bury for life in dungeons those of their brethren who may accuse them. In a word, they have established the Inquisition.

I know that in the multitude of these wretches who infest the half of Europe, and whom seduction, ignorance and poverty have precipitated into cloisters at fifteen years of age, there have been men of singular spirit, who have risen superior to their condition, and have been serviceable to their country. But I may venture to say, that all such great men, whose merit has pervaded both the cloister and the world, have invariably been persecuted by their jealous brethren. Every learned man, every man of genius, endures more insolence, is attacked with more envy in these seminaries, than

he would have experienced in the outside world. The ignoramus and the fanatic, who maintain the interest of the wallet, have more deference paid them than the greatest genius in Europe would receive.

The horror which reigns in these caverns seldom meets the secular eye; and when it bursts forth, it is with the explosion of horrible crimes. We have seen in the month of May of this very year (1766) eight of these unhappy men called Capuchins, accused of having murdered their superior in Paris.

Nevertheless, by a strange fatality, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, on their bended knees reveal the inmost secrets of their hearts to these men—the refuse of nature—who, polluted with all crimes, boast of remitting the sins of mankind, in the name of that God whom they themselves create, and whom they claim to worship and adore.

How often have they inspired those they call their penitents, with all the atrocity of their own characters? They have been the principal fomenters of the religious animosities which embitter life. The judges who condemned the Calases and the Sirvens confessed to monks—they gave Calas two monks to accompany him to the scaffold. These two men, less barbarous than their brethren, at first acknowledged that Calas, expiring upon the wheel, called upon God with the resignation of innocence. But when they were required to give an attestation of this fact, they refused to do it, dreading to be punished by their superiors for having told the truth.

In fine, who would credit it, after the solemn verdict given in favor of the Calases, that there should be an Irish Jesuit, who, in the most insipid of all pamphlets, has dared to say that the defenders of the Calases and the masters of the requests, who did justice to their innocence, were enemies to religion?

The Catholics reply to these reproaches, that the Protestants are susceptible to the like reproaches. The murders of Servel and Barnwell, they say, are at least upon a par with the assassination of the counsellor Du Bourg. The death of Charles I. may be put in competition with that of Henry III. The gloomy rage of the English Presbyterians, and the fury of the cannibals of the Cévennes, are equal to the horrors of St. Bartholomew.

Compare sects, compare times, you will everywhere find, for one thousand six hundred years, nearly an equal proportion of absurdity and horror everywhere, among a race of blind men, who are destroying each other in the obscurity which surrounds them.

What book of controversy is ever written without gall? What theological dogma has not been the cause of spilling human blood?

This was the necessary effect of those unfortunate words:

"Whosoever listens not to the Church, shall be looked upon as a pagan and a publican."

Each party pretended to be the Church—each party has therefore constantly said "We abhor the officers of the customs, and we are enjoined to treat whoever differs with us in opinions as the

smugglers treat the officers of the customs, whenever they have the superiority."

Thus, the first dogma everywhere established was hatred.

When the King of Prussia entered for the first time into Silesia, deputies from a little Protestant borough, jealous of a Catholic village, came humbly to beg the king's permission for putting all the inhabitants of that village to the sword.

The king replied to the deputies: "If the people of that village came to ask my permission to cut your throats would you think me right to grant it to them?"

"Oh, gracious sovereign," replied the deputies, "the case is quite different; we are the true Church."

NOTES ON SOME OF THE WRITERS WHO LIVED IN THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV.

[These graphic sketches relate to the more interesting of the many referred to by Voltaire.]

Of the French writers who flourished in the age of Louis XIV.:

Abadie, James, was born in Béarn in 1658. He was celebrated for his "Treatise upon the Christian Religion"; but he afterward hurt the reputation of that work by another, called the "Opening of the Seven Seals." He died in Ireland in 1727.

Abadie, or Labadie, John, was born in the province of Guienne in 1610. He was first a Jesuit, then a Jansenist, and afterward a Protestant; and at

last wanted to form a sect of his own, and unite with La Bourignon, who told him that every one had his particular share of the Holy Spirit, and that hers was greatly superior to his. He has left thirty-one volumes of fanatical writings. I have given him a place here only as an example of the weakness of human understanding. He was not, however, without his disciples. He died at Altena in 1674.

Amelot de la Houssaye, Nicholas, was born at Orleans in 1634. His translation, with political notes, and his historical writings, are greatly sought after; but his alphabetical "Memoirs" are very faulty. He was the first who ever furnished a true idea of the Venetian government. The senate took umbrage at his history, being still prepossessed with the old mistaken notion that there are certain political mysteries which should not be revealed. Since then, however, it has been discovered that there are no such mysteries, and that true policy consists in being rich, and keeping good armies on foot. Amelot translated and commented upon Machiavelli's "Prince," a work which was long the favorite of petty lords, who disputed for ill-governed territories; but became useless at the time that so many mighty princes, always in arms, suppressed the ambitious views of the weaker. Amelot thought himself the greatest politician in Europe; but he could never rise above a middle station, and at length died extremely poor: the reason was, that he was a politician in genius only, and not in character. He died in 1706.

Anselm, an Augustine monk. He was the first

to compile a genealogical history of the great officers of the crown, which has been continued and augmented by Du Fourni, auditor of accounts. We have but a very confused notion of what constitutes the great officers of the crown. It is generally thought they are those who bear the title of "great," in virtue of their office; as grand master of the horse, and grand cup-bearer: but the constables, the marshals, and the chancellors, are great officers, though they do not bear the title of great; and there are others who do bear this title, and yet are not reckoned great officers. The captain of the guards, and the first gentleman of the bedchamber, are, in fact, great officers, though they are not reckoned such by Father Anselm. However, there is nothing certain on this head; and there is as great confusion and uncertainty in regard to all the rights and titles in France, as there is order and regulation in the administration. He died in 1694.

Arnauld, Anthony, a doctor of the Sorbonne, born in 1612, and the twentieth son of that Arnauld who pleaded against the Jesuits. He is universally known for his eloquence, his erudition, and his disputes, which acquired him so much reputation, and made him at the same time so unfortunate, according to our ordinary ideas of things, which place exile and poverty in the number of misfortunes, without reflecting that glory, friends, and a healthy age, were the portion of this famous man. It is said, in the supplement to Moréri, that Arnauld, in 1689, in order to ingratiate himself with the court, composed a libel against King William, under the title of "A True Picture of William-

Henry of Nassau, the Modern Absalom, Herod, Cromwell, and Nero." This style, which resembles that of Father Garaffe, is very unlike Arnauld's. Besides, he never entertained a notion of flattering the court. A book with so gross a title would have met with a very bad reception from Louis XIV. and those who ascribe this work, and the view in which it was written, to the famous Arnauld, are ignorant that writing books was no kind of introduction to that court. This great man died at Brussels in 1694.

Arnauld d'Andilly, Robert, elder brother to the former, was born in 1588. He was one of the great writers of Port-Royal. His translation of Josephus, which is the most esteemed of all his works, was presented by him to Louis XIV. at the age of 85. He was father of Simon Arnauld, Marquis of Pompone and minister of state, who, notwithstanding his high character and interest, was unable to prevent the disgrace which befell his uncle, the doctor of the Sorbonne, on account of his disputes. He died in 1674.

D'Auvrigni, the Jesuit. He is author of "A new Method of writing History." We have his "Chronological Annals from the Year 1601 to 1715," in which everything of importance that passed in Europe, during that space of time, is accurately and concisely related. He is very exact in the dates of his transactions. No writer has ever made a juster distinction between truth, falsehood, and uncertainty. He has likewise composed "Ecclesiastical Memoirs"; but unhappily they are tainted with a party spirit. Marcel and he have both been

eclipsed by President Hénault in his "Chronological History of France," which is the most concise, and at the same time the most complete, work of the kind ever published, and the most convenient for the reader.

Bayle, Peter, was born at Carlat, in the county of Foix, in 1647. He retired into Holland rather as a philosopher than a Calvinist. He was persecuted during life by Jurieu, and after his death by the enemies to philosophy. Could he have foreseen how universally his dictionary would be read, he would have made it still more useful, by retrenching obscure and increasing the illustrious names. He is more esteemed for his excellent manner of reasoning than for his style, that being frequently too prolix, loose, and incorrect; and sometimes so familiar as to sink into a degree of lowness: he was rather a great logician than a profound philosopher: he understood scarcely anything of natural philosophy, and was wholly unacquainted with the discoveries of the great Newton. Almost all his philosophical articles take for granted, or else contradict a Cartesian theory which has no longer any existence; he knew no other definition of matter than extent: its other acknowledged or supposed properties have at length given birth to true philosophy. There have been new demonstrations and new doubts, so that the skeptical Bayle is in several places not enough of the skeptic: he lived and died like a wise man. Desmaiseux has written his life, of which he has made a large volume, whereas it should not have exceeded

six pages. The life of a sedentary writer is to be found in his works. He died in 1706.

Beaumont de Péréfixe, Hardouin, was preceptor of Louis XIV., and archbishop of Paris. His "History of Henry IV.," which is only an abridgment, inspires us with a love for that great prince, and is well calculated to form a good king. He composed it for the use of his royal pupil. It was thought that Mézeray had a share in writing it: there is indeed a good deal of his manner in it; but Mézeray was not master of that affecting style in many places so worthy of the prince whose life Péréfixe wrote, and of him to whom he addressed it. Those excellent counsels for governing alone were not inserted until the second edition, after the death of Cardinal Mazarin. We can form a much juster idea of Henry IV. from a perusal of this history, than from that of Daniel, which is written in a dry manner, and has too much about Father Cotton, and too little concerning the great qualities of Henry IV. and the particulars of the life of this excellent king. Péréfixe affects every sensible heart, and makes us adore the memory of this prince, whose weaknesses were only those of an amiable man, and whose virtues were those of a great one. He died in 1670.

Beausobre, Isaac de, was born at Niort in 1659, of a family distinguished in the profession of arms. He was one of those who have done honor to their country, which they have been obliged to quit. His "History of Manichæanism" is one of the most learned, curious, and best written pieces extant: here we find clearly explained the philosophical

religion of the Manes, which was formed upon the dogmas of the ancient Zoroaster and Hermes, which for a long time seduced St. Augustine himself. This history is enriched with many curious things in antiquity; but after all, this, like so many other excellent works, is only a collection of human errors. He died at Berlin in 1738.

Boileau-Despréaux, Nicholas, of the Academy. He was born in the village of Crosne, in the neighborhood of Paris, in 1636: he made his first essay at the bar, and afterward entered into the college of the Sorbonne: but alike displeased with the tricks of both, he gave himself up entirely to the impulse of his genius, and became the honor of France. His works have been already so much commented upon that any panegyric here would be superfluous. He died in 1711.

Bossuet, James Benignus, of Dijon, was born in 1627; he was bishop of Condom, and afterwards of Meaux. We have fifty-one different pieces of his writing; but his "Funeral Orations," and his "Discourse on Universal History," are the works that have immortalized his name. It has been several times asserted in print, that this bishop was married, and that St. Hyacinthus, who was famous for the share he had in the little joke of Matanasius, passed for his son; but there never was any proof of this. A family of eminence in Paris, which has produced several persons of distinguished merit, affirm, that there was a private contract of marriage between Bossuet, when very young, and one Mademoiselle des Vieux; that this lady made a sacrifice of her passions and

hopes to the interest of her lover, whose eloquence bade fair to procure him considerable advancement in the church, and consented to give up the contract, as the marriage had not been consummated; that Bossuet, released from his engagements, entered into holy orders; and that after his death this family had the settling of this affair, and declare that the lady never made an ill use of the dangerous secrets she was mistress of; she always lived in a chaste and respectful friendship with the bishop of Meaux, who enabled her to purchase the little estate of Maulion, about five leagues distant from Paris, of which she took the title, and lived to almost the age of a hundred. It is moreover pretended that this great man's sentiments as a philosopher were different from what he taught as a divine, like a learned magistrate, who at the same time that he gives sentence, according to the letter of the law, may in private rise superior to it by the force of his genius. He died in 1704.

Bouhours, Dominic, a Jesuit, was born at Paris in 1628. The French language and good taste are much indebted to him: he was author of several very good pieces, which gave birth to some excellent criticisms: *ex privatis odiis respublica crescit.* His "Life of St. Ignatius de Loyola" did not greatly please the generality of readers; and that of St. Francis Xavier underwent some strictures; but his remarks on language, and above all his "Method of Judging Rightly of Works of Genius," will be always of use to young people, who are desirous of forming their taste; he teaches them to avoid

bombast, obscurity, far-fetched and false thoughts. If he passes sentence somewhat too severely upon certain passages of Tasso, and other Italian authors, he as often condemns them justly; his style is pure and pleasing. The little tract above mentioned greatly offended the Italians, and brought on a kind of national quarrel. It was thought, that the opinion of Father Bouhours, which was strengthened by that of Boileau, might come to be a kind of law. The Marquis d'Orsi, and some others, composed two very large volumes in defence of some of Tasso's verses: but here let it be remarked, that Father Bouhours would have had very little right to reproach the Italian writers with their false thoughts, who himself compares Ignatius Loyola to Cæsar, and Francis Xavier to Alexander, only that he was very seldom guilty of these faults.

Boulainvilliers, Count, of the house of Crouy: the most learned gentleman of the kingdom in history, and the most capable of writing that of France, had he not been too systematic. He calls the ancient feudal government the "Masterpiece of Human Genius": he regrets those times in which the people, enslaved by ignorant and brutal petty tyrants, were without industry, commerce, or property; and is of opinion, that a hundred lords, the oppressors of the earth, and the enemies of their prince, composed the most perfect of all governments. Notwithstanding this wild hypothesis he was an excellent citizen, as, notwithstanding his weakness for judicial astrology, he was an able philosopher, so far as it is the part of a

philosopher to hold life as nothing, and despise death. There is printed at the end of his works, a large scheme for rendering the King of France richer than all the other monarchs of the world. But it is plain that this piece was not written by the Count de Boulainvilliers. He died about 1720.

Bourdaloue was born at Bourges in 1632; he was a Jesuit, and the chief model for all good preachers in Europe. He died in 1704.

Breteuil, Gabrielle Emilie, Marchioness du Châtelet, was born in 1706. She illustrated the writings of Leibnitz, and translated Newton with comments—a merit which was of little use to her at court, but which gained her the veneration of every nation that had a love for learning, who admired her depth of genius and eloquence. Of all the women who have adorned France, she had the greatest share of true understanding, and affected the least to be thought a wit. She died in 1749.

De Bruis, the abbé, was born in Languedoc in 1639. Although the author of ten volumes of controversy, his name would have been buried in oblivion, but for his work called "The Grumbler," which is far superior to any of Molière's farces, and the "Advocate Patelin," an ancient monument of the true Gaulish simplicity revived by him, will make him known as long as there is a stage in France. He was assisted by Palaprat in these two pretty pieces. These are the only works of genius that were ever composed by two authors jointly. He died in 1723.

Calprenède, Gauthier de la, was born at Cahors, about 1612. He was one of the gentlemen in ordi-

nary to the king: he was the first who brought long romances into fashion. The merit of these consisted in a number of adventures, the intrigue of which was artfully enough conducted, and, though incredible, not altogether impossible. Boyardo, Ariosto, and Tasso, on the contrary, loaded their poetic romances with fictions entirely unnatural; but the charms of their versification, the innumerable beauties of the detail, and the admirable allegories, especially those of Ariosto, altogether, have made their poems immortal; while the works of La Calprenède, like most other great romance-writers, have fallen in estimation. What has chiefly contributed to their fall is the great perfection the stage is arrived at. In a good tragedy, or a good opera, we meet with a much greater number of sentiments than are to be found in all these enormous volumes: these sentiments are at the same time much better expressed, and there appears a much clearer knowledge of the human heart. Thus Racine and Quinault, who have given a little into the style of these romances, have contributed to obliterate them by speaking more truly to the heart, and in a manner more tender and harmonious. He died in 1663.

Cassini, John Dominick, was born in the county of Nice in 1625, and was invited to France by Colbert in 1666. He was the first astronomer of his age; but he began, like all others, by the study of astrology. As he was naturalized in France, and married and had children there, and died in Paris, he may justly be accounted in the number of Frenchmen. He has rendered his

name immortal by his meridional clock of St. Petrona at Boulogne, which shows the variations in the swiftness of the earth's motion round the sun. He was the first who demonstrated, by the parallax of the planet Mars, that the sun is at least thirty-three millions of miles distant from the earth. He foretold the path described by the comet of 1664; he also discovered the five satellites of Saturn, of which Huygens had seen only one; and this discovery of Cassini's was celebrated in a historical medal of Louis XIV. He died in 1712.

Chapelain, John, was born in 1595. Had it not been for his *"Pucelle,"* or "Maid of Orleans," he would have had some reputation in the literary world: he got more, however, by that wretched poem than Homer did by his "Iliad." Chapelain was nevertheless of some use by his learning. It was he who corrected Racine's first poetical attempts. At this first setting out, he was the oracle of all poets, and at length became their disgrace; he died in 1674.

La Chapelle, receiver-general of the finances, was author of some tragedies, which had success in their time. He was one of those who endeavored to imitate Racine; for this great writer, like the great masters in painting, formed a school without knowing it. This Raphael in poetry did not, however, form a Julio Romano; and yet some of his first disciples wrote with tolerable purity of language; whereas, in the decline which followed, we have seen, even in our time, whole tragedies in which there are not four lines together without some gross faults.

Choisy, Francis de, was born at Rouen in 1644; he was envoy at Siam, and has left us an account of that embassy: he composed several historical pieces, and a translation of the "Imitation of Jesus Christ," dedicated to Madame de Maintenon, with this motto: *"Concupiscet rex decorum tuum"*; as also the "Memoirs of the Countess des Barres," which countess is himself; he having worn the dress, and lived as a woman for several years: he made a purchase of an estate near Tours, under the name of the Countess des Barres. In these "Memoirs" he relates freely the many mistresses he had under this disguise. Whilst he led this life he wrote the "History of the Church." In his "Memoirs of the Court" we meet with several facts, of which some are true, some false, and many taken upon trust; they are written in rather too familiar a style.

Corneille, Peter, was born at Rouen in 1606. Though at present only six or seven of his pieces are played, yet he will always be the father of the stage. He is the first who raised the genius of the nation, and that is sufficient to gain pardon for about twenty of his pieces, which, except in a very few places, are the worst that we have, both for style, barrenness of intrigue, and insipid and misplaced amours; and by a heap of wire-drawn conversations, which are the reverse of true tragedy. But we are to judge of a great man only by his excellencies, and not by his faults. It is said that his translation of the "Imitation of Christ" went through thirty-two editions; this however is as difficult to believe as it is to read one of them.

He received a gratification from the king in his last illness; he died in 1684.

It is said in several printed collections of anecdotes, that he had a particular place set apart for him at the play-house, and that, whenever he came in, everybody rose and received him with a clap. Unhappily, mankind are not so ready to do justice to merit. The real truth is, that the king's comedians refused to play his last eight pieces, and he was obliged to give them to another company.

Corneille, Thomas, was born at Rouen in 1625. He would have gained great reputation, if he had not had a brother. There are thirty-four dramatic pieces by him. He died poor, in the year 1709.

Daniel, Gabriel, a Jesuit.—He was historiographer of France, and has rectified the mistakes of Mézeray, concerning the first and second races of our kings. It is alleged against him, that his diction is not always sufficiently pure; that his style is poor and uninteresting; that he is not lively in his descriptions; that he has not given sufficient insight into customs, manners, and laws; and that his history is a tedious detail of military operations in which a historian of his character is almost always mistaken.

The Count of Boulainvilliers, in his memoirs on the French government, says, that Daniel is guilty of a thousand errors. This is saying a great deal; but luckily those errors are of as little consequence as the real truths would have been in their room; for, of what importance is it to know whether it was the right or the left wing that gave way at the battle of Montlhéry, or by what way

Louis the Fat entered the ruins of Puiset? A member of society is desirous of knowing by what steps the government came to change its form, what were the several privileges and encroachments of the different bodies, what was done by the general estates, what was the spirit of the nation, etc. Father Daniel's history, with all its faults, is still the best that is to be found, at least till the reign of Louis XI. He asserts, in his preface, that the early periods of the history of France are more interesting than those of Rome, because Clovis and Dagobert possessed larger territories than Romulus and Tarquin. He was not aware, that the weak beginnings of all great things are interesting to mankind; we are fond of beholding the trifling reign of a nation, to which France was but a province, and which extended its empire to the Elbe, the Euphrates, and the Niger. It might be acknowledged that our history and that of other nations, from the fifth century to the fifteenth, is only a chaos of barbarous adventures, under barbarous names.

Descartes, René, born at Touraine in 1596, was son of a counsellor of the Parliament of Brittany. He was the greatest mathematician of his time, but a philosopher who knew the least of nature, when compared with those who came after him. He passed the greater part of his life out of France, that he might pursue his philosophical studies more at liberty, in imitation of Saumaise, who took a similar step; but he was disappointed of the quiet he thought to find in a retirement in Holland. Two professors of the balderdash school divinity, taught

at that time, the one named Voet, and the other Shockius, brought the ridiculous charge of atheism against him, with which almost every philosopher has been branded by contemptible writers. It availed him nothing that he had exhausted his genius in collecting proofs of the existence of a God, and in searching for new ones. His enemies compared him to Vanini, in one of the pieces they published against him; not that Vanini was really an atheist—the contrary has been demonstrated—but he was burned as such, and they could not have made a more shocking comparison. Descartes found it difficult to obtain a very slight satisfaction, by a decree of the Academy of Groningen. His "Meditations," his "Discourse on Method," are still in esteem; his natural philosophy is entirely fallen, being founded neither on geometry nor experiments. He was a long time in possession of so prodigious a reputation that La Fontaine, who knew nothing of the matter, indeed, but was the echo of public voice, said of him,

> Descartes, in ages past, had been
> Adored as God. He ranked between
> Pure soul and man immured in cloister,
> As human brutes 'twixt man and oyster.

The abbé Genêt, a writer of the present century, has unfortunately been at the pains to translate Descartes's natural philosophy into French verse.

It is only since 1730 that France has begun to recover from the errors of that chimerical philosophy, and since that experimental philosophy and geometry have been cultivated. Descartes has

had the same fate in natural philosophy, as Ronsard had in poetry. He died at Stockholm, in 1650.

Duché was valet de chambre to Louis XIV. He made some tragedies for the court, taken from holy writ, like Racine, but not with equal success. His opera of "Iphigenia at Tauris" is his best piece. It is written in the sublime taste; and, though it is but an opera, it affords a strong idea of the best things in the Greek tragedies. This taste did not last long, and soon after we were reduced to simple ballets, consisting of detached acts, made solely for the sake of introducing the dances; thus, even the opera began to degenerate, at the time that almost every other theatrical production was upon the decline.

Madame de Maintenon made the fortune of this author, by recommending him in such strong terms to Monsieur de Pontchartrain, secretary of state, that, supposing him to be a person of some consideration, the minister went to pay him a visit. When Duché, who at that time lived very obscurely, saw a secretary of state enter his house, he thought it was to carry him to the Bastille.

Fénelon, Francis de Salignac, archbishop of Cambray, was born in Périgord, in 1651. We have fifty-five different productions of his, all of which seem to come from a heart full of virtue, but his "Telemachus" especially inspires that virtue: he has been in vain condemned by Gueudeville and the abbé Faidit: he died at Cambray, in 1715.

After the death of Fénelon, Louis XIV. burned, with his own hand, all the manuscripts which the Duke of Burgundy had preserved of his precep-

tor's. Ramsay, who was brought up under this celebrated prelate, wrote to me in these words: "Had he been born in England, his genius would have discovered itself more strongly; and he would, without fear, have given full scope to his principles, which no one was acquainted with."

Lefèvre, Anne, Madame Dacier. She was born in the Calvinist faith, at Saumur, in 1651, and is famous for her great learning. The Duke of Montausier employed her on one of those books which were called the Dauphin's, for the education of that prince. "Florus," with Latin notes, is hers: her translations of Terence and Homer have brought her immortal honor: her only fault was a too great fondness for her own translations. La Motte attacked her with wit, and she replied with erudition. She died at the Louvre in 1720.

La Fontaine, John, was born at Château-Thierry in 1621. He was the most plain and simple man living, but admirable in his way, though negligent and unequal. He was the only good writer of his time who did not partake of the bounties of Louis XIV., though entitled to them by his merit and his poverty. His "Fables" are for the most part infinitely superior to any that have been written before or since, in any language whatsoever. In the tales which he imitated from Ariosto, he lacks that writer's elegance and purity; he falls far short of him in his descriptions, which defect escaped Boileau in his "Dissertation on Joconde," because he did not understand Italian: but in those tales which he has taken from Boccaccio, La Fontaine is superior, as having a much greater

share of wit, elegance, and art, than the Italian, whose only merit is simplicity, perspicuity, and exactness of language, but La Fontaine corrupted the French. He died in 1695.

Fontenelle, Bernard le Bovier de.—Though he was living in 1756, yet he must be an exception to the rule we have laid down for ourselves of not admitting any living person into this catalogue, his great age, being near a hundred when he died, seems to demand this distinction. He is at present equally above panegyric and criticism. He may be considered as the most universal genius that the age of Louis XIV. produced, and may be compared to a soil that from its happy situation bears every kind of fruit. He was not twenty years of age, when he composed the greatest part of the tragic opera "Bellerophon"; after which he wrote his opera of "Thetis and Peleus," in which he has greatly imitated Quinault. It was performed with great success; but his "Æneas and Lavinia" was not so well received. He tried his powers in tragedy, and assisted Mademoiselle Bernard in some of her pieces. He composed two, one of which was played in 1680, but never printed. This piece drew upon him for a long time very unjust reproaches; for he had merit enough to be sensible, that notwithstanding his extensive genius, he was not possessed of the talents of his uncle, Peter Corneille, for tragedy. He wrote several detached pieces, in which there appeared a depth of knowledge and ingenuity, that plainly discover a man superior to his own works. In his "Dialogues of the Dead" and in his verses we may remark the

spirit of Voiture, but much more extensive and philosophical. His "Plurality of Worlds" was a performance singular in its kind. He had the art of making an agreeable book of the "Oracles of Vandale." The delicate subjects which are touched upon in that work subjected him to some underhand persecutions, which, however, he had the good fortune to get the better of. He perceived how dangerous it is to be in the right in those things where men of power and interest are in the wrong. He then applied himself to geometry and natural philosophy, in which he succeeded with as much ease as he had done in the more pleasing arts. Being appointed perpetual secretary to the Academy of Sciences, he occupied that office for more than forty years, with universal approbation. In his history of that academy, he frequently throws a strong light upon the most obscure memoirs. He it was who introduced that elegant manner of treating the sciences. If he is in some places too flowery, we should consider them as rich harvests wherein flowers naturally grow up with the corn.

His "History of the Academy of Sciences" would be as useful as it is judiciously executed, if his only task had been to give an account of truths brought to light; but he was obliged to explain different opinions that contradicted one another, and which are for the most part destroyed.

The elogiums which he pronounced on the deceased members of the academy have the singular merit of rendering the sciences respectable, and of establishing the merit of the author. In

vain have the abbé Desfontaines, and others of his stamp, attempted to obscure his reputation; it is the property of great men to have contemptible enemies. Notwithstanding his having lately published a few indifferent comedies, and an "Apology for the Vortices of Descartes," we will readily pardon the faults in his dramatic pieces, on account of his great age; and his Cartesian principles, in consideration of those ancient opinions having been when he was young the generally received ones of all Europe.

In a word, he is considered as the head of those who have the pleasing art of throwing new lights and graces upon the abstract sciences. He has also great merit in every other work which he has undertaken. These great talents were supported by a knowledge of languages and history; and he was without contradiction superior to all the learned men who have not had the gift of invention.

Gassendi, Peter, was born in Provence, in 1592. He was the restorer of part of the Epicurean system of natural philosophy. He perceived the necessity of atoms, and of a vacuum; and what he affirmed, Newton and others have since demonstrated. He was not considered so great as Descartes, because he was more rational, and no inventor of hypotheses: nevertheless he was accused of atheism, as well as Descartes. Some imagined that he who would, with Epicurus, admit a vacuum, would, like him, deny the existence of a God. This is the way of reasoning of all detractors and calumniators. In Provence, where there was no

one jealous of him, Gassendi was called the holy priest. At Paris, the voice of envy gave him the title of atheist. It is true that he was a skeptic, and that philosophy had taught him to doubt of everything, but not of the existence of a supreme being. He died in 1656.

Godeau, Anthony.—He was one of those who helped to establish the French Academy: he was a poet, an orator, and a historian. It is well known that for the sake of a pun, and in reward for his having rendered the *"Benedicite"* into verse, Cardinal Richelieu gave him the bishopric of Grasse; his "Ecclesiastical History" in prose is more valued than his poem on the "Church Calendar"; he was greatly deceived in thinking to equal the *"Fasti"* of Ovid; neither his subject nor his genius being sufficient for it. It is a great mistake to think subjects of Christianity as fit for poetry as those of Paganism, whose mythology, as pleasing as it was false, animated all nature. He died in 1672.

Duhalde, the Jesuit, without stirring out of Paris, or having ever seen China, has, from the memoirs of his fraternity, given the best and most ample description of the Chinese empire that has ever appeared. He died in 1743.

Our insatiable curiosity for knowing every minute particular relating to the religion, laws, and manners of the Chinese, is not yet satisfied: a burgomaster of Middleburg, named Hudde, a man of great fortune, guided wholly by his curiosity, took a voyage to China, in the year 1700, where he laid out the greater part of his fortune in informing himself of everything. He became so proficient

in the Chinese language that he was taken for a native of that country: luckily for him his face favored the mistake. After some time he found means to be raised to the rank of a mandarin, in which quality he travelled through all the provinces, and at length returned to Europe, with a collection of forty years' observations. Unhappily, the ship they were on board was cast away, which was the greatest loss that ever befell the republic of letters.

Huet, Peter Daniel, was born at Caen in 1630; he was a man of universal learning, and retained the same ardor for study till the age of ninety-one: he was invited to Stockholm by Queen Christina, and was one of those illustrious personages who assisted in the education of the dauphin, than whom no prince had ever greater masters. Huet turned priest when he was forty years of age, and had the bishopric of Avranche given him, which he afterward resigned, that he might be more at leisure to pursue his studies in retirement. Of all his productions, "The Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients," and the "Origin of Romances," are the most read. His treatise on "The Weakness of the Human Understanding" made a great noise, and seemed to contradict his "Evangelical Demonstrations"; he died in 1721.

Longepierre, Hilary-Bernard, Baron of.—He was born in Burgundy in 1658: he was master of all the beauties of the Greek language; a very rare degree of merit in his time. We have some translations by him in verse of "Anacreon," "Sappho," "Bion," and "Moschus"; his tragedy of "Medea,"

though unequally written, and too full of declamations, is far superior to that of Peter Corneille: but Corneille's "Medea" was written before he was at the height of his reputation. Longepierre composed several other tragedies upon the model of the Greek poets, whom he has happily imitated in not blending love with subjects of terror and cruelty; but at the same time he has copied them in the tediousness of their commonplaces, and in the barrenness of action and intrigue, and not equalled them in beauty of elocution, which constitutes the greatest merit of a poet. Though he wrote several other tragedies in the Greek taste, he gave only "Medea" and "Electra" to the stage. He died in 1727.

Maintenon, Frances d'Aubigné, Scarron, Marchioness of.—She was an author as well as Madame de Sévigné, because her letters have been printed after her death. Both of these ladies write with a great deal of spirit, but of a very different kind. The "Letters of Madame de Sévigné" are dictated by the heart and the imagination, and are more sprightly and free. Those of Madame de Maintenon are more constrained, and seem as if she had foreseen they would one day be made public. Madame de Sévigné, in writing to her daughter, wrote only for that daughter. There are several anecdotes to be found in both these collections. We may perceive in those of Madame de Maintenon, that she was married to Louis XIV.; that she had considerable influence in State affairs, but that she did not direct them; that she did not hasten the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and its consequences,

neither did she oppose it; that she sided with the Molinists at first, because Louis XIV. did so, and that at length she became seriously attached to that party; that Louis XIV. in the latter part of his life, used to carry relics about him; with several other private anecdotes. But the little knowledge that may be gained from this collection is too dearly bought by the number of useless letters it contains; a fault which is common to all collections of this kind. If nothing was to be printed but what is useful, there would not be a hundredth part so many bad books. She died at St. Cyr in 1719.

Malebranche, Nicholas, of the Oratory, was born at Paris in 1638. He was one of the deepest meditators that ever wrote. As he abounded with that forcible imagination which makes more disciples than truth, he had his disciples in his time; there were those that went by the name of "Malebranchians." He has admirably shown the errors of the senses and imagination; but when he attempted to dive into the nature of the soul, he was lost in the abyss, as others had been before him. He was, like Descartes, a great man from whom very little was to be learned. He died in 1715.

Massillon was born in Provence in 1663. He belonged to the Oratory, and was bishop of Clermont. No preacher had a better acquaintance with the world: he was more flowery and pleasing than Bourdaloue; his eloquence was that of the courtier, the academic, and the man of wit; and what is more, he was a philosopher, moderate in his opinion, and a friend to toleration. He died in 1742.

Molière, John Baptiste, was born at Paris in 1620. He was the best comic poet that any nation ever produced. This article led me to read over the comic poets of antiquity; and it must be confessed, that if we compare the art and regularity of our stage with the loose and unconnected scenes of the ancients, their weak intrigues, and the indelicate custom of making their actors relate, in long, insipid, and improbable soliloquies, either what they had done, or what they were going to do; it must be confessed, I say, that Molière drew comedy from its chaos, as Corneille did tragedy; and that the French are superior, in this respect, to any nation under the sun. Molière, again, had another kind of merit than what either Corneille, Racine, Boileau, or La Fontaine possessed: he was a philosopher, and such both in theory and practice; and yet to this philosopher was it that Harlay, archbishop of Paris, so despised on account of his morals, denied the empty honor of sepulture; and the king himself was obliged to intercede with that prelate to permit Molière to be privately interred in the churchyard of the little chapel of St. Joseph, in the suburbs of Montmartre. He died in 1673.

Montesquieu, Charles, president of the Parliament of Bordeaux. He was born in 1689. At twenty-three years of age he published his "Persian Letters," a comic work, abounding with strokes that show an understanding more solid than his book. This work is an imitation of the "Siamese" of Dufresny and the "Turkish Spy"; but such an imitation as shows how the originals should have been written. Such performances seldom succeed

but by the help of a foreign air; and a satire upon our own nation is better received from the pen of an Asiatic than from that of a countryman, as what is common of itself becomes by this means singular. The genius which reigns in the "Persian Letters" opened the doors of the French Academy to the President Montesquieu, though that Academy had itself been ill-treated in his book; but at the same time, the freedom with which he speaks of the government, and of abuses in religion, incurred the displeasure of Cardinal Fleury, who ordered them to be shut against him again. He fell upon an artful method of making that minister his friend: in a few days' time he caused a new edition of his book to be printed, in which he retrenched or softened everything that could appear exceptionable to him, either as a cardinal, or a minister of state. Monsieur de Montesquieu then waited upon his eminence in person with his book, who, though not much accustomed to read, perused some part of it. This air of confidence, supported by the good offices of some persons of credit, won over the cardinal, and Montesquieu was admitted into the Academy.

After this he published his treatise on "The Greatness and Fall of the Roman People"; a worn-out subject, but which he made new by very ingenious reflections, and lively descriptions: so that it is a political history of the Roman empire. At length his "Spirit of Laws" made its appearance; a work in which there appears much more genius than either in Puffendorf or Grotius. We cannot read these authors without doing ourselves some

kind of violence; but we read the "Spirit of Laws" as much for amusement as instruction. This book is written with as much freedom as the "Persian Letters"; and this freedom did not a little contribute to its success, by drawing upon him enemies, who increased his reputation by the hatred they brought upon themselves. These were a set of men, who, delighting in the obscure factions of ecclesiastical controversy, hold their own opinions as sacred, and those who despise them as impious and sacrilegious. They wrote with great acrimony against Montesquieu, and prevailed on the Sorbonne to examine his book; but the infamy and contempt with which his persecutors were loaded, prevented that college from proceeding any farther. The principal merit of the "Spirit of Laws" is that love for the laws that reigns throughout the whole work, which love is founded on that for mankind. What is most extraordinary is, that the encomiums he gives to the English government pleased most in France. The smart and stinging irony against the Inquisition, which is found in this work, charmed all the world, except the Inquisitors: his reflections, which are almost always profound, he supports by examples drawn from the history of all nations. It is true that he has been reproached with taking his examples too frequently from inconsiderable savage nations, in a manner unknown, and upon the accounts of travellers, whose fidelity there is too much reason to suspect. He is not always very exact in his quotations: for instance, he makes the author of the "Political Testament," ascribed to Cardinal Richelieu, say: "If there should

be found among the people an honest man unfortunate, that man must not be employed"; whereas "The Political Testament," in the place quoted, only says that it is best to employ men of fortune and education, as the least liable to be corrupted. The continual want of method throughout this work, the singular affectation of putting no more than two or three lines in a chapter, and that frequently, and those lines nothing but a piece of pleasantry, has disgusted many readers, who complain of meeting sometimes with sallies of wit where they expected arguments. This author is also reproached with having advanced too many doubtful ideas for certain ones; but if he does not always instruct his reader, he always sets him thinking, and that is no small degree of merit. His lively and ingenious manner of expression, in which we trace the imagination of his countryman, Montaigne, has, above all, contributed to the great reputation of the "Spirit of Laws"; the same thing said by a man of equal or even superior learning to him would not have been read. In short, there is not any work in which there is more wit, and a greater number of learned ideas and bold things; or where a reader can find more opportunities for instruction, whether he approves or condemns his opinions. We may, with justice, rank this in the number of original works that were an ornament to the age of Louis XIV. and which have no model in antiquity. He died in 1755, like a philosopher, as he had lived.

La Motte-Houdart, Anthony, was born at Paris in 1672. He was famous for his writings, and

amiable in his manners: he had many friends, that is to say, people who were pleased with his company; but I was with him in his last moments, and saw him expire without a creature by his bedside. This was in 1731.

Pascal, Blaise.—His father was the first intendant that was appointed at Rouen: he was born in 1623, and was a great genius, of the superiority of which he thought of availing himself, in the same manner as kings of their power, that is, to bring everything in subjection to him by main force. What in his "Thoughts" most disgusts some readers is the contemptuous, authoritative air he assumes; but he should first have been sure he had reason on his side. It must be owned that he contributed much to the improvement of our language, and eloquence. His enemies and those of Arnauld found means to prevent any notice being taken of either in Perrault's book on "Illustrious Men." This gave occasion to the quoting and applying to them that passage of Tacitus: *Præfulgebant Cassius et Brutus eo ipso quod eorum effigies non visebantur.* He died in 1662.

Petis de la Croix, Francis.—He was one of those whose merit the great Colbert encouraged and rewarded. At the age of seventeen, he was sent by Louis XIV. to Turkey and Persia, to learn the Oriental languages; and, what will appear a little extraordinary, he wrote a part of the life of Louis in Arabic, which is read and esteemed in the East: he wrote besides, the "History of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane," compiled from ancient Arabian authors; and many other valuable tracts. But of

all his performances his translation of "A Thousand and One Days," is the most read.

Quinault, Philip, born at Paris in 1635, was auditor of accounts, and wrote some very beautiful pieces of lyric poetry, notwithstanding Boileau's satire, which he bore with a great deal of good nature. Quinault was much superior in his way to Lulli. The former will always be read, whereas the latter, setting aside his recitative, cannot even be sung: yet in his own time he was supposed to be indebted to Lulli for his reputation: but time tries all things. He partook, like many other great men, of the bounty of Louis XIV. He died in 1688.

Marquis de Quincy, lieutenant-general of the artillery, was author of the "Military History of Louis XIV." He is very minute in his details, which may be useful to those who have patience to follow him through the operations of a campaign. Could exactly the same situation be supposed to exist, they would furnish good examples, but that is never the case, neither in business nor war. The difference is always great, and the resemblance imperfect. The conduct of war, like a game in which skill is requisite, is only to be learned by practice and service, and yet the event of a battle, like that of a game of hazard, is often determined by chance.

Racine, John, born at Ferté-Milon in 1639, and educated at Port-Royal. When he wrote the tragedy of *"Théagènes,"* and presented it to Molière, and that of the *"Frères Ennemis,"* with the subject of which Molière furnished him, he was an ecclesiastic. In the patent to "Andromache," he is

styled prior to Epinay. Louis XIV. was not insensible to his great merit. He made him a gentleman in ordinary, nominated him sometimes on his retinue when he went to Marly, made him lie in his apartment once during a fit of sickness, besides showing many other marks of favor; yet Racine died of chagrin, from an apprehension of his having incurred his displeasure; by which it appears that he was a greater poet than philosopher. The merit of his works was not ascertained till of late. "Mariamne," says St. Évremond, "Sophonisba," "Alcionée," "Andromache," and "Britannicus" are affecting pieces. Thus was not only Corneille's "Sophonisba," a sorry performance, but the absurd "Mariamne" and "Alcionée" set on a level with the other masterpieces. Thus is gold confounded with trash during the lives of ingenious men, but death separates them. He died in 1699.

Regnard, Francis, was born at Paris in 1647. His travels alone were sufficient to render him famous. He was the first Frenchman who visited Lapland, where he left this inscription cut on a rock: *"Sistimus hic tandem nobis ubi defuit orbis."* "I have got at last to the extremity of the world." He was taken in the Mediterranean by a corsair, and carried to Algiers, but was afterward ransomed and made treasurer of France, and lieutenant of the waters and forests. He was a man of pleasure and a philosopher; his genius was sprightly, and truly comic. His comedy called "The Gamester," is thought not inferior to those of Molière. One must be a great stranger to the genius of the two authors, to suppose that he stole that piece from

Dufréni. He dedicated his "Menechmes" to Despréaux, and afterwards wrote against him, because he had not done him justice. Notwithstanding the gayety of his temper, he died of chagrin at the age of 52. It has even been said that he cut short the thread of his days himself. He made his exit in 1658.

La Rochefoucauld, Francis, Duke de, was born in 1613. His memoirs are read, but his thoughts are not only read, but got by heart. He died in 1680.

Rollin, Charles, born at Paris in 1661, was rector of the university, and the first of that body who wrote French with purity and dignity. The last volumes of his "Ancient History" are not equal to the first, as being composed in much greater haste; yet it is one of the best compilations extant in any language, because Rollin was a master of eloquence, which few compilers are. Had he been also a philosopher, it would have greatly enhanced the value of his work. There are a number of ancient histories; but in none of them do we find that philosophical sagacity that distinguishes between truth and falsehood, between probability and fable or fiction, and suppresses what is useless and frivolous. He died in 1741.

Rotrou, John, born in 1609, was the founder of the theatre. The first scene and a part of the fourth act of *"Venceslas"* are masterpieces. Corneille used to call him his father; but every one will agree that the son greatly surpassed the father. *"Venceslas"* was not written till after "The Cid." He died in 1650.

Rousseau, John Baptist, born at Paris, 1669. Fine verses, great errors in conduct, and great sufferings, have conspired to render him famous. We must either suppose him the author of the verses that occasioned his banishment, which, by the bye, are not unlike many that he avowed, or throw a slur upon the two tribunals that condemned him. It is not the first time that two tribunals, and even more numerous bodies, have, with one voice, pronounced very unjust sentences, when party spirit runs high. This much is certain, that the party against Rousseau were full of rancor and resentment. Few men have ever been more universally hated and persecuted. Nothing less would satisfy the public than his banishment; nay, their aversion continued unabated several years afterward. But at last the success of his rival, La Motte, the reception he met with, the reputation which, as they thought, he had unjustly and unfairly acquired, and the artifice by which he had raised himself to a sort of empire in literature, made all the men of letters forsake him, and declare for Rousseau, whom they now no longer dreaded. By their means the public in general was reconciled to him. La Motte now began to appear to them too happy, because he was rich and in vogue, notwithstanding he was blind, and labored under many infirmities and disorders. On the contrary, Rousseau was viewed in the light of an unhappy exile; and to live at Vienna or Brussels was thought a greater misfortune than to be blind and infirm. But indeed both were very unhappy: only the one was the victim of nature, the other of the unlucky ad-

venture that occasioned his banishment. Both may serve to show what partiality and injustice men are capable of, how much they vary in their judgments, and what folly it is to hunt after popular applause. He died at Brussels in 1740. See the article on "La Motte."

Le Sage, born in 1667. His romance of "Gil Blas" still keeps its ground, because it is natural. He died in 1747.

St. Évremond, Charles, born in Normandy in 1613. Loose morals, letters written to courtiers, at a time when the word "court" was pronounced with an emphasis everywhere, indifferent verses composed in illustrious societies, and for that reason called "Society Verses," all concurred, with a good deal of spirit, to raise the reputation of his works. They were printed by one des Maiseux, together with the life of the author, which alone makes one large volume, and yet in the whole there are not four pages that are interesting. It contains scarcely anything but what is to be found in his works. It was an imposition of the booksellers and editors. By such artifices a way has been found to multiply books *ad infinitum,* and without adding anything to the knowledge of mankind. His exile, his philosophy, and works, are well known. When he was asked on his deathbed, if he would be reconciled to the Church, his answer was: "I wish I could be reconciled to my appetite." He died in 1703, and was interred at Westminster, with the kings and illustrious men of England.

L'Abbé de Saint-Pierre, Castel, a gentleman of Normandy, who, though his income was not great,

yet for some time shared it with the celebrated Fontenelle and Varignon, wrote a great deal on politics. There is no better character of his works in general than that given by Cardinal de Bois: that they were the reveries of a good subject. He was simple enough to inculcate in his works the most trivial moral truths, and to propose for the most part things impracticable; he was continually harping on the scheme of a perpetual peace, and a sort of universal parliament, which he called the Diet of Europe. Part of this chimerical project had been attributed to Henry IV. and the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, the better to recommend his notions, pretended that the European diet had been planned and approved by the dauphin, Duke of Burgundy, and that the scheme was found among his papers after his death. But it was a mere fiction of his own, to make his project the better relished. He honestly published the answer that Cardinal Fleury made to his proposal: "You have forgotten, Monsieur," says the cardinal, "to propose in the first place to send a company of missionaries to prepare and dispose the hearts of the several princes." Yet, notwithstanding all this, Abbé de Saint-Pierre did a deal of good. He contributed not a little to deliver France from the hardships of the arbitrary land-tax; with respect to that, and that alone, he wrote and acted like a statesman. He was unanimously excluded from the French Academy, because he had, during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, a little too harshly opposed in his *"Polysinodie"* the establishment of councils to the method of governing adopted by Louis XIV., the

protector of the Academy. The intrigue for that end was managed by Cardinal de Polignac, and it succeeded. What is a little unaccountable is, that the regent did not prevent it, though Cardinal de Polignac was at that very time plotting against him; and he had given Abbé Saint-Pierre an apartment in the Palais Royal, and had his whole family in his service. However, the abbé did not complain. He continued to live like a philosopher, with those who had excluded him. Boyer, the ancient bishop of Mirepoix, his fellow-member, prevented his elogium from being pronounced at the Academy according to the custom. These fine speeches at the death of an academician add nothing either to his merit or reputation; yet in the present case, the refusal was barbarous. The service he had done his country, his probity, and his gentle disposition entitled him to better treatment. A few days before his death, I asked him what he thought of it. He replied, that he considered it as a journey or jaunt into the country. Of all his performances, that on the future abolition of Mahometanism is the most remarkable. He is positive that the time will come, when reason will be more than a match for superstition everywhere; when men will see and be convinced that, to please God, patience, beneficence, and humanity alone are required.

"It is impossible," says he, "that a book, in which falsehoods are asserted for truths, absurdities advanced that contradict common sense, and praises bestowed on actions manifestly unjust, should be a revelation from God." He fancies that in five hundred years, all sorts of persons, even the lowest,

will be convinced of the imposture, and that even the mufti and the cadis will find it to their interest to disabuse the people, and to reform their religion, in order to render themselves more necessary and respected.

Sandras, Courtilz de, born at Montargis in 1644, is mentioned for no other reason than to put the French, especially foreigners, on their guard against those forgeries published in Holland. Courtilz was one of the most infamous writers in this respect. He deluged Europe with fictions, under the title of histories. What a scandalous thing was it that a captain of the regiment of Champagne should go to Holland, and support himself by selling lies to the booksellers. He, and such as follow his example, in writing libels against their country, against good princes who scorn, and private persons who have it not in their power to punish them, can be considered only as the most execrable and abandoned wretches. He wrote the "Conduct of France Since the Peace of Nimeguen," and the answer to it: "The State of France Under Louis XIII. and XIV."; "The Conduct of Mars in the Dutch Wars"; "The Love Conquests of the Great Alexander"; "The Love Intrigues of France"; "The Life of Turenne and Admiral Coligny"; "The Memoirs of Rochefort, Artagnan, Monbrun, Vordac, and the Marchioness de Frêne"; the "Political Testament" of Colbert, and many other pieces, by which simpletons have been imposed on and abused. The authors of those miserable pamphlets against France, entitled "le Glaneur," "l'Épilogueur," are his humble imi-

tators. These pieces, which hunger prompted, and stupidity and falsehood dictated, are read by none but the canaille. He died at Paris in 1712.

Saurin, James, born at Nîmes in 1677. He was esteemed the best preacher among the Protestants. Notwithstanding, his style is said to savor of the refugee. "It can hardly be supposed," says he, "that those who have foregone their country for the sake of their religion, should speak their native language in its purity." But in his time, the French spoken in Holland was better than it is at present. Bayle's style had nothing of the refugee; the only thing that can be objected to it is a familiarity that approaches sometimes to lowness. The defects in the language of the Calvinist preachers, were occasioned chiefly by their copying the incorrect phraseology of the first reformers; besides, almost all of them having been educated at Saumur, in Poitou, in Dauphiny, and in Languedoc, they still retained the vicious provincial modes of expression. The place of minister to the nobility at The Hague was instituted on purpose for Saurin. He was a man of learning and pleasure, and died in 1730. His family was not all related to that of Joseph Saurin, of the Academy of Sciences, who is the author of some extracts from the *"Journal des Savans,"* some mathematical memoirs, and the noted "Factum" against Rousseau. Joseph died in 1737.

Scarron, Paul, the son of a counsellor of the great chamber, was born in 1598. His comedies are rather farces than comedies, and *"Virgil Travesti"* could be received only as the work of a buf-

foon. His "Comical Romance" is his only work that is still relished by people of taste, as Boileau predicted. He died in 1660.

Scudéri, Madeleine, was born at Havre in the year 1607. She is better known at the present day by some pretty pieces of poetry, than by the unwieldy romances of "Clélie" and "Cyrus." Louis XIV. treated her with respect, and settled a pension upon her. She gained the first prize for eloquence bestowed by the academy. Her death occurred in 1701.

Sénecai, first valet de chambre to Maria Theresa, was a poet of a singular turn of imagination. His "Tale of Kaimac," take it altogether, displays great genius. It serves to show that very pretty tales may be told in a manner quite different from that of Fontaine. It is observable that this, though the best he wrote, is the only work not to be found in his collection. His *"Travaux d'Apollon"* has also peculiar beauties.

Sévigné, Mary de Rabutin, was born in 1626. Her letters, which are full of anecdotes, and written with freedom and spirit, in a lively style, are the best criticism that can be on your studied letters, in which there is a manifest affectation of wit, and still more on these fictitious letters written to imaginary correspondents, and stuffed with absurd sentiments and adventures in a pretended epistolary style. She died in 1696.

De Torcy, John Baptist Colbert, nephew of the great Colbert, minister of state under Louis XIV., left memoirs of the public transactions from the Peace of Ryswick to that of Utrecht. They were

published, while this essay on the Age of Louis was in the press, and confirm everything advanced in it. They are very minute, and therefore only fit for those that want to be thoroughly acquainted with the subject of them. The style is better than that of any of the memoir writers who were his predecessors. They display the taste of Louis XIV.'s court. But what stamps the highest value on them is the candor and sincerity of the author, which shines through the whole. He died in 1746.

Tristan l'Hermite, gentleman to Gaston of Orleans, brother of Louis XIII. The long and surprising run which his tragedy of "Mariamne" had was owing to the ignorance of the times. They had then no better; and it even held up its head some time after Corneille made his appearance. In some nations, at this day, very indifferent performances pass for masterpieces, because they have had none better. It is not generally known that Tristan turned the office of the virgin into verse, nor is it at all strange that it is not. He died in 1655. Here follows his epitaph:

> A wretched spaniel crouching by his lord,
> I still was poor, and pleaded still disaster;
> I lived in waiting at proud fortune's board;
> And died upon a bench, in waiting on my master.

Le Vayer, Francis, born at Paris in 1588. He was preceptor to Monsieur, brother of Louis XIV., and, during one year, to Louis himself. He was also historiographer of France, and counsellor of state. His skepticism was well known, and yet did not prevent his being entrusted with the important office of educating these princes. Though

his works are too prolix, yet there is a great deal of just reasoning and learning in them. He was certainly the most learned member of the Academy. His skepticism is bolder and more undisguised than that of Bayle, and he is more severe and cynical in his satire. His motto was,

> Of all those maxims deemed secure,
> The most secure is still to doubt.

As that of Montaigne, *"Que sais-je?"* "What know I?" He died in 1672.

Veyssière, Mathurin de Lacroze, was born at Nantes in 1661. He was a Benedictine at Paris. Being a free-thinker, and his superior of a quite different character, he resolved to quit both his order and his religion. He was a prodigy both for learning and for memory. Not content with studying and understanding what was useful and agreeable, he must needs study what could not be known, such as the ancient Egyptian language. One piece that he wrote, on the "Christianity of the Indies," is much esteemed. There is one remarkable thing that we learn from it, and that is, that the Brahmins, notwithstanding the idolatry of the people, believe that there is but one God. Such is the itch for writing, that a life of this man has been published, making a volume as large as that of Alexander. Such an extract as this would have been enough, and too much. He died at Berlin in 1739.

Villedieu, Madame de. Her romances have gained her a reputation. But I would not have the reader think that I set any value upon that inundation of romances with which France has been

lately overflowed. Almost all of them, except "*Zaid*," are the productions of persons of no genius, who wrote in an easy agreeable style things unworthy the notice of men of sense. Most of them are quite destitute of imagination, and though read and admired by young people, whose taste they spoil, they are not worth, all together, four pages of Ariosto. She died in 1683.

Voiture, Vincent, born at Amiens in 1598, was the first Frenchman who was what is called in France a *bel esprit*. His writings have little else to recommend them, and yet they are not proper models to form our taste upon; but wit was then a rare thing. He wrote some very pretty bits of poetry, but nothing considerable.